Short Stories from English History

BLAISDELL

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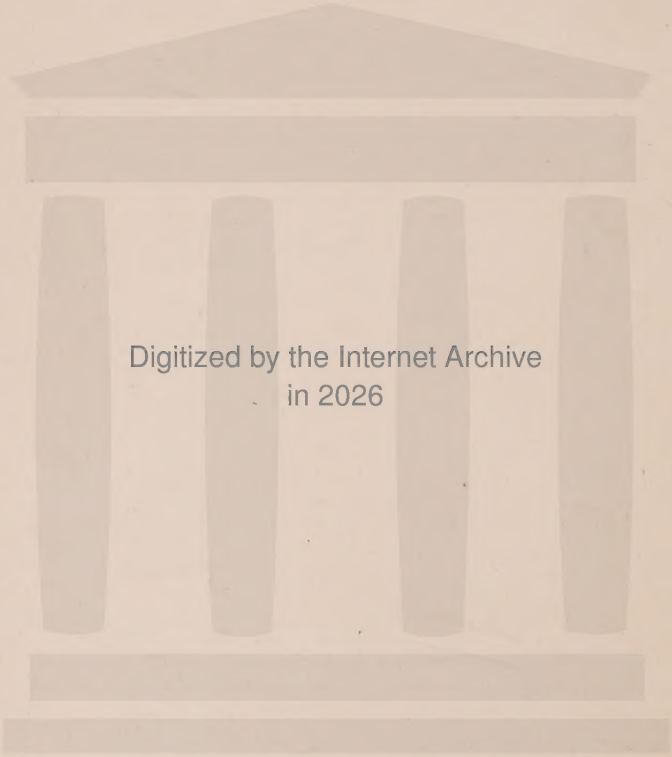
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PRINCE ARTHUR AND HUBERT. (See page 72.)

From a photograph of a painting by Yeames.

STORIES

FROM

ENGLISH HISTORY

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE PRESENT DAY

EDITED FOR SCHOOL AND HOME USE

BY

ALBERT F. BLAISDELL

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PREFACE.

This is a book of stories from English history, edited for school and home use. It is intended to serve as a supplementary reading book for boys and girls from ten to fifteen years of age. It consists of a series of dramatic and notable events in English history from the earliest time to the present day, carefully compiled and rewritten from standard books and well-known authors.

The material has been arranged in the form of stories with the intent to arouse a lively interest in historical reading and a keen desire to know more about the history of our mother country.

It has been the aim of the editor to furnish in a readable and connected form a useful and convenient introduction to more advanced works for young folks on similar subjects, such as those written by Charles Dickens, Charlotte M. Yonge, George M. Towle, A. J. Church, S. R. Gardiner, and others.

It is needless to say that some of the stories, so far as historical accuracy is concerned, rest upon very slender foundations. Any discussion of this point in a book of this kind would be obviously out of place. It is a curious fact that one of the best authenticated stories — the well-known story of King Canute and the rising tide — is one of the least probable. Again, the story of Queen Philippa and her intercession for the citizens of Calais is given in detail by Froissart, who was a boy at the time; and yet there is good reason to doubt its truth. Whatever semi-mythical character may be attached to these and other familiar stories in this book does not detract of course from the pleasure and instruction which they may afford youthful readers.

These stories, supplemented with various picturesque anecdotes, are written purposely in an easy and familiar style and in very simple language, with the aim to attract and hold the attention of young pupils.

A. F. B.

April, 1897.

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STORIES

FROM

ENGLISH HISTORY

STORIES FROM ENGLISH HISTORY.

1. BRITAIN IN THE OLD DAYS.

Before the Birth of Christ.

A LONG, long time ago, before the English came to live in England, the country was called Britain, and the people who then lived in it were called Britons.

Now you must know, and keep in mind, that Britain in the old days did not look as England does now; and that the old Britons did not live like the English people of our day, or dress like them, or speak as they speak.

I am going to tell you about people who lived two thousand years ago. Think what a long time that is, — a hundred years before Christ was born!

Now, if you had been living in England two thousand years ago, what would you have seen? I am sure you cannot tell me, so I will tell you. You would have seen the same hills that are to be seen to-day, and the same valleys, and rivers, and lakes. But little else would have been as it is now.

You would have seen no busy towns, no quiet, cozy villages, with their church spires peeping out above the trees, no farms, no orchards or gardens, no paved streets,

no steam or electric cars, no big cotton mills, and no network of telegraph wires.

But instead you would have seen great dark forests spreading far and wide, where the wolf and the bear had their dens; and broad, still pools where the land was low; and patches of open country that the plough had never broken.

Here and there you might have seen a number of huts made of wickerwork and mud, with no windows — with only a hole at the top to let out the smoke. They were built on the edge of some forest, with a ditch dug round them, or trunks of trees piled up in front of them to keep out the wild beasts. All the towns they had were only clusters of such huts.

And how did the people look, you will ask, in those dim, long-past ages? Well, they were tall and fair; they had blue eyes and long yellow hair. But they looked like savages, and lived like savages. They did not know how to read or write. Most of them went half-naked, with only the skins of wild beasts about them; and they stained their faces, arms, and breasts with a blue dye to make themselves look fierce.

They made no coins, but used metal rings for money. They were clever in basket work, as savage people often are; and they could make a coarse kind of cloth, but their earthenware was very poor.

For boats they had "coracles," or basket-boats, made of twisted twigs and covered with the skins of animals.

In these they paddled along the rivers to catch fish. They killed the fish with spears made of wood, or else caught them with hooks made of bone. Many of their boats were so light that a man, or even a boy, could carry one home on his back.

Many of the old Britons were hunters, who lived on the animals they slew, and on the wild fruits that grew in the woods. Some of them were herdsmen, who lived mostly on milk and the flesh of their cattle. A few, who dwelt in the south and were less savage, tilled little patches of grain, and traded with merchants who now and then came over from lands beyond the seas.

ANCIENT BRITON IN HIS CORACLE.

They made swords of copper mixed with tin; but these swords were of an awkward shape, and so soft that a heavy blow would bend them. The Britons made light shields, short pointed daggers, and spears.

After they had thrown daggers and spears at an enemy, they jerked them back with a long strip of leather fastened to the shaft. At the butt end of the spear or dagger was a rattle which the warrior used to frighten an enemy's horse.

The ancient Britons, being divided into as many as thirty or forty tribes, each with its own little king, were constantly fighting with one another, as savage people usually do.

They were very fond of horses. They could break them in and manage them wonderfully well. They were also very clever in making war-chariots. These chariots had a large, sharp-curved scythe fastened to the axle of each wheel, and made much havoc when driven into the thick of the fight.

While at full speed, the horses would stop at the driver's word. The men within would leap out, deal blows about them with their swords, leap on the horses or upon the pole, spring back into the chariots, and, as soon as they were safe, the horses would tear away again.

I am sorry to tell you that these old Britons did not know the true God. They used to worship the sun and the moon, and held sacred the mistletoe that grows on the oak tree. Their priests, who were called Druids, used to teach them that their souls, when they died, would go into the bodies of beasts ; and that it was right, and pleasing to their gods, to burn their enemies whom they took in battle.

These Druids had very great power among the people. They settled all disputes, and if any man refused to obey their orders, he was treated as an outcast from the tribe. The Druids carried on their worship in the gloomy shade of oak groves. Sometimes they put to death great numbers of men and women, as a religious offering to their gods.

These Druids had great regard for the mistletoe. When this plant was found growing upon an oak tree, the chief Druid called all the tribe together on the first day of the new year, and with much show cut down the plant with a golden sickle. The mistletoe was then given away in pieces, to be taken home as a lucky charm for the new year.

At Christmas time we still like to place this plant in our houses, and in this way we are put in mind, when the glad holiday comes, of this old custom of the Druids. But the mistletoe has a better meaning for us. Living and bearing fruit in winter, when other plants seem dead, it reminds us of the life that neither winter nor time can kill.

2. HOW THE ROMANS CAME TO BRITAIN.

55 Years before the Birth of Christ.

ONE bright morning in summer, in the old days we have been speaking of, a great crowd of Britons stood on the white chalk cliffs of Kent. Every now and then they looked across the narrow seas towards France, or Gaul, as it was called at that time.

It was plain that they were making ready for a battle. Every man was half-naked, his breast and arms and face painted with new war-paint, and a weapon of some sort in his hand. Some had clubs, some had spears, some had flint-headed darts to throw at their foes, and a few of them had long blunt swords and round shields of basket work with which to guard their bodies.

Most of them were on foot, but a few rode on horseback; and there were some who stood up in low wooden chariots drawn by two horses. These war-chariots, you will remember, had a sharp scythe fastened to the axle of each wheel, which cut down men as a mower cuts down grass.

But why were the Britons standing on the cliffs this bright summer morning? Why did they keep looking over the sea toward Gaul? Let me tell you. A vessel had come in with the startling news that a Roman army, which had been fighting against the Gauls, was coming across the sea to conquer Britain.

The news roused the country like a trumpet blast. Julius Caesar, a brave and skillful general, who had conquered wherever he fought — Caesar was coming to invade Britain!

Men sprang to their horses. Through the forests and over the hills, from one hamlet to another, they rode shouting their war-cry and calling the people to arms. Before long not a man was to be seen in the grainfields. The women and children stayed at home and took care of the cattle.

The news which the vessel had brought was indeed true. The Britons soon spied, far out at sea, a number of black specks that looked, at first, like a flock of sea-gulls. But as they came nearer and nearer, the Britons saw that they were Roman ships, full of Roman soldiers, whose bright brass helmets and brass breast-plates flashed in the summer sun.

Before the prows of the Roman ships could touch the beach, the Britons dashed into the sea, and with savage war-shouts flung their darts at the Romans. For a while the Romans, though brave and fearless, dared not leave their ships. But at last a soldier who carried the Roman standard — a small golden eagle on a staff — leaped into the waves, and called out to his comrades, "Follow me!"

Then the Romans leaped into the sea; for no Roman soldier dared to leave the eagle in the hands of the foe, or he would be put to death in his own

land. Grasping their short, sharp swords, and raising their great shields to keep off the darts, they rushed in a long, solid line up the beach.

The poor, naked savages fought like lions, but they were no match for the brave and well-drilled soldiers of Rome. Before the close of that summer day, the sand on the sea beach was strewn with the dead and the dying; the Britons had been driven back to their woods. But they were not yet beaten.

From their forest homes they watched the enemy; and, fighting in war-chariots, on horseback or on foot, they constantly cut off small parties and lonely camps. If armies fought, the dreaded chariots of the Britons swept like the rush of a torrent through the Roman ranks, leaving behind them a path of dead bodies. Once, when some Roman soldiers went out to reap grain, the Britons fell upon them so suddenly that few escaped.

Caesar had to bring over more soldiers and fight many more battles, before the Britons gave in, and were forced to call the Romans their masters. It was agreed that the Britons should pay a yearly sum of money to Caesar.

Soon after Caesar went back to Gaul, very glad, no doubt, to leave a country where little was to be had, except by hard fighting. He never came back to Britain, but after this time the island became much better known to the rest of the world.

3. THE STORY OF THE CAPTIVE KING.

8 50 Years after the Birth of Christ.

WE have seen that Caesar soon went away from Britain. Almost a hundred years after, the Romans came again with ships and with a great number of soldiers. Again the Britons fought bravely for their country.

Among the British chiefs in those days, one stands out in fame above all the rest. His name was Caractacus. He was a brave warrior, and he dearly loved his country. His bravery, skill, and courage were talked about all over the island, and his fame reached even as far as the city of Rome itself.

The Romans hoped to kill him in battle, or to take him prisoner, for they knew that while he was alive and free, the conquest of the land would not be easy. For nine long years he struggled against the Romans, and gave them blow for blow; but he was driven back at last into the hill country of the west.

There is a high hill in the west of England with a swift river flowing at its foot, which the people to this day call "The Camp of Caractacus." Here the brave chief fought his last battle. One day his little band of Britons — all that was now left to him — was standing on this hill, when they saw a great Roman army marching up the valley. The Romans were ten to one; but

the British king drew up his men behind walls of earth and loose stones, and called on them to defend their homes and their native land with the last drop of their blood. "Conquer the Romans," he cried, "or they will make you slaves."

The Romans came up, dashed across the river, and made a rush up the hillside. The Britons flung their darts at them as they came on. But the Roman soldiers lifted their shields above their heads, and put them side by side, making a sort of a roof of them; so that the darts struck the shields and bounded off, as you have sometimes seen the hailstones bound off a roof in a pelting storm.

There was a fierce hand-to-hand fight on the hilltop, but it was soon over. The blunt swords of the Britons were useless against the brass armor and the shields of the Romans, who thrust their sharp steel blades into the half-naked bodies of their enemies, stabbing them through and through.

The Britons were beaten, and the heroic chief and his wife and daughter fell into the hands of the Romans. Then they were put in chains and sent to Rome as captives. It was a custom of the Romans, when they took noble captives in battle, to lead them through their city, and make a great show of them in long procession before putting them to death.

So the British king with a train of captives, was led in triumph through the streets of Rome. People

crowded the streets and windows and housetops to catch a sight of him, for all of them had heard of the tall blue-eyed savage who had beaten the best soldiers of Rome in many a hard-fought battle.

CARACTACUS AND HIS WIFE BEFORE THE ROMAN EMPEROR.

When the proud captive king saw marble temples and rich palaces on every side of him, he could not help saying, "Why should these Romans, who have such

grand houses at home, wish to rob me of my lowly hut in Briton?"

The captives were led before the ruler of the Romans, the Emperor Claudius, who sat on his throne in the open air; and, as they came near him, they lifted up their chained hands and wept and cried aloud for mercy,—all but Caractacus. He stood erect; and no proud Roman in the crowd around the throne looked more fearless than he.

"Briton," said the emperor in surprise, "knowest thou not that thou must die? All who bear arms against Rome, as thou hast done, are doomed to death."

"Torn from my home and robbed of freedom," replied Caractacus, "I have nothing now to live for; nor do I fear death more here than on the field of battle."

Struck with his noble bearing, the emperor made up his mind to grant him his life.

"Thou shalt not die," he said. "Thou art free. Rome is able to forgive a brave enemy."

The Roman soldiers at once struck off his chains, and from that day Caractacus was free.

Some of the old books tell us that Caractacus went back to Britain, and was made a prince under the Romans; but nothing more is really known about him than what I have told you. No one knows whether his great heart broke and he died in Rome, or if he ever returned to his own dear country.

4. THE STORY OF THE BRAVE WARRIOR QUEEN.

61 Years after the Birth of Christ.

IN the eastern part of Britain there lived, in the old days of which I am telling you, a British queen named Boadicea. She was the widow of a king who had ruled over a large and warlike tribe. The Roman general who commanded in Britain at this time had gone to the other side of the island to attack the Druids. In his place he left an officer — a cruel man who hated the Britons.

This cruel officer tried to force Boadicea to give up her land to him; and, because she would not, he ordered her to be publicly beaten with rods. So the proud queen was scourged in the presence of the Romans, and her two daughters were also most cruelly treated.

When Boadicea was set free, she called upon the Britons to rise and fight against the Romans. So they gathered at her bidding by tens of thousands.

Standing in her chariot, with her long yellow hair streaming in the wind, a large golden collar on her neck, a loose mantle fastened by a clasp on her breast, she poured forth fierce and fiery words to the warriors around her.

"Know you," she cried, "what these bloodthirsty Romans have done to your queen? If you are men, you

will rise and sweep these invaders from our shores! Me, a Briton queen, they scourged in the presence of their hired legions — me they marked with their cruel whips! Rise, Britons, fight for your queen and your homes or be forever slaves!"

The savage Britons answered their queen with furious shouts and with the clash of the swords and shields. She led them against the enemy and routed the Roman army with great slaughter. Then she turned against three Roman cities, and put every man, woman, and child to the sword. Seventy thousand of them were slain. The land ran with Roman blood; and it seemed as if the Britons were once more to hold the island as their own.

BOADICEA LEADING HER SOLDIERS TO BATTLE.

But when the news came to the chief Roman general, he hurried back with his men, and fell upon the British tribes. The brave but unskilled Britons went down before the short heavy swords of the Romans like grain before the scythe of the reaper. Boadicea herself, when

she saw all her hopes gone, and nothing but a life of slavery before her, took poison and died, we are told, rather than fall into the hands of the victor.

In spite of all that the brave Britons could do, the Romans made themselves masters of the country. They kept many thousands of soldiers in it, and ruled it for nearly four hundred years. At the end of that time they took away their officers and soldiers, because these were needed in their own land. So Britain once more was left to itself.

Under the rule of the Romans, the Britons lost their freedom; but they learned a great deal from their masters. They learned to build good houses and fine roads, to have better clothes, and to live very much more comfortably than they did before the Romans came.

Often, even now, when men are digging in England, they find things that were used by the Romans in these old times,—rusty coins, pieces of plate from which they ate, of goblets from which they drank, of pavements on which they trod. The wells which the Romans dug give water yet; and the roads which they made are highways still.

In some old battlefields, British spearheads and Roman armor have been found, mingled together in decay, as they fell in the thick of the fight. Traces of Roman camps overgrown with grass, and of mounds that are the burial-places of heaps of Britons, are to be

seen in many parts of the country. Across the black moors, those dreary plains in the north of England, the old flattened ridge of the Roman wall, overrun with moss and weeds, still stretches, a strong ruin; and the shepherds and their dogs lie sleeping on it as they tend their flocks in the long summer afternoons.

English oaks have grown up from acorns, and withered away, when they were hundreds of years old,— and other oaks have sprung up in their places, and died too, centuries old,— since the fearless captive king and the heroic warrior queen fought so bravely for their native land.

5. THE COMING OF THE ENGLISH.

About 450 Years after the Birth of Christ.

AS I have told you, the Romans were forced at last to leave Britain, after having been there nearly four long centuries. Word was brought to them that hordes of savage tribes were marching through their own fair, sunny country of Italy, and that the proud city of Rome itself was in danger. So their armies had to leave Britain.

In a short time there were no Roman soldiers left in any part of Britain. The Romans had scarcely gone away from the country when their enemies wished they had never left it. The truth is these Britons were not so brave as their fathers had been, and they had never been taught to fight.

So when they were left to themselves, the fierce, wild tribes in the north, called Picts and Scots, came swarming into the country, burning the houses, trampling down the grainfields, and driving the Britons back into the woods.

The Romans had built two strong walls across the northern part of the country. But as there were no soldiers to man these walls, they were no barrier to the wild Picts and the hardy Scots, who poured over them in greater and greater numbers.

In the south, fierce bands of coast pirates roved the seas, now landing here, now landing there, and taking away with them grain and cattle, as much as their ships could hold.

In their distress the Britons sent a letter to their old masters, the Romans, asking for help.

This letter is called "the groans of the Britons." It says: "The barbarians drive us to the sea, the sea drives us back to the barbarians, — between them we are exposed to two kinds of death; we are either killed or drowned." But no help came from the Romans; they had their own troubles, and were too busy fighting against their own enemies. This led the Britons to look to others for help.

Now these bold rovers of the sea that I have just told you about were our own English forefathers. The Romans knew them very well, and feared them too. They called them sea-wolves, sea-dogs, and sea-robbers. They came from the forests of Jutland — Denmark we call it now — and from the German coast near the mouth of the river Elbe.

The Britons called them Saxons, but they, for the most part, called themselves Angles, or English.

Like the Britons, they were a brave and fearless race, fond of fighting and very fond of the sea. They were tall sturdy fellows, with long yellow hair, blue eyes, and ruddy faces; true as steel to their friends, but fierce and cruel to their enemies.

Every warrior had his keen-pointed dagger, a tall spear, a huge battle-axe, and a sharp sword, all of good iron. They had also bows and arrows, and some of them carried a large, heavy hammer spiked with iron. No helmet was proof against this fearful weapon. But how came these Angles, or English, to live in England, and how came the land to be called Angleland, or England? Let me tell you.

One day when the savage Scots were ravaging the land, three ships full of English warriors, in strong leather helmets and coats made of iron rings, were seen cruising off the coast. When the British king heard of it, he sent word to the sea-robbers that if they would land upon the coast and help him drive back the Scots, he would give them a part of the country called Kent to live in.

So the English warriors came under their two chiefs, Hengist and Horsa, and drove back the Scots, and settled in England. But when they had beaten the Scots, the English liked the country so well that they made up their minds to stay, and so used their swords against the Britons themselves, and took the whole of Kent from them, and made Hengist their king.

Let me now tell you a story of Hengist's beautiful, fair-haired daughter whose name was said to be Rowena. It was at a feast that the British king Vortigern saw her. The lovely girl filled a bright, golden goblet with wine, and, smiling sweetly on the Briton, handed

VORTIGERN AND ROWENA.

it to him, with the words, "Dear king, I wish you health!"

She was so charming that Vortigern fell in love with her on the spot, and wanted to marry her at once; and he did marry her. Afterwards, when the Angles began to attack the Britons again and to take their land from them, Vortigern used to be very angry.

But when he was going to punish them, Rowena begged him to be kind to her people, and spare them for her sake, softly saying, "Dear king, they are my people! Be kind to them, as you loved that Saxon girl who gave you the golden goblet of wine at the feast!"

He always listened to her, and the Angles soon became stronger and stronger in Britain, and gained more and more of Vortigern's land. At last the poor British chief lost his whole kingdom and was put in prison, where he died.

By and by more English sea-kings came over, landed in other parts of the country, drove the poor Britons away, and settled upon their lands. In this way, inch by inch, the Britons were driven back and back from east to west, till, in the end, they had only the mountains left to live in; and there they have lived ever since. The country they live in is now called Wales.

In a hundred years after the landing of Hengist and Horsa, the Angles, or English, were masters of Britain, and it has been called Angleland, or England, from that day to this.

6. HOW THE ENGLISH BECAME CHRISTIANS.

About 600 Years after the Birth of Christ.

WHEN the English first settled in England they were still heathen, and did not believe in the true God. They used to worship the sun and the moon, and other pagan gods, and even springs and trees, the sea and the lightning.

One of the gods was Thor, the thunder god, whose hammer they thought they heard in the thunder-clap. Another was Woden, the great god of war, who, they said, was the father of their kings. The English named the days of the week after their gods. Thus Sunday meant the Sun's day, Monday the Moon's day, Wednesday was Woden's day, and Thursday was the day of the thunder god, Thor.

It was a strange, wild, warlike sort of faith. They thought that only those who died in battle would be happy forever with the gods, and that in heaven they would hunt or fight all day, and have as much boar's flesh and ale as they could eat and drink. When a chief died they buried him in full armor, and laid his sword and his spear beside him. They also slew his favorite horse and his dog, and placed their bodies near his, believing that they would be of use to him in the other world.

One thing the Saxons loved above all others, and that was freedom. They did not give their chiefs very great power. No chief nor king could make a new law. They loved justice, and they set each man to watch every other, so that he should do no wrong. If any one did wrong and ran away, all the people in each town had to pay a fine. They were thus sure to watch that no wrong-doer escaped.

In the place of this worship of pagan gods was slowly to come the gospel that told these fierce warriors of peace and good will to all mankind. The mountains, the rivers, and ancient oaks were soon to echo back the worship of the true God, and not to remain the objects of idolatry. I will now tell you of an incident that paved the way for it.

Though the Saxons loved freedom for themselves, we are sorry to say that, like most other people of their time, they had many slaves. When a Saxon noble had more people on his land than he needed, or more slaves than he could find food for, he would take some of the boys and girls and sell them as slaves to the people of other countries.

In this way English boys and girls were sent even as far as Rome to be sold as slaves. When they reached the Imperial City, they were taken to the slave market and offered for sale. Trembling and frightened the captive children stood, feeling as we would feel if we found ourselves in a strange place with no one to

care for us, and not knowing one word of the language the people around us were speaking.

One day some English boys who had been carried off as slaves, were standing in the market-place at Rome, waiting for some one to buy them, when a kind-hearted monk named Gregory came walking by. When he saw their sweet, fair faces, their blue eyes, and their golden hair, his heart was moved with pity for the children. He asked a keen-eyed merchant of what nation they were.

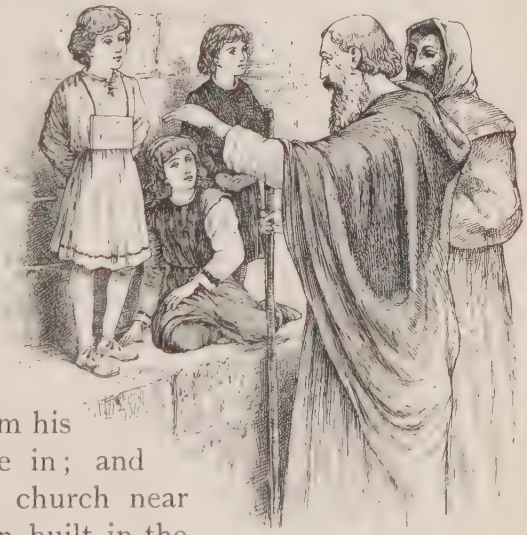
He was answered, "They are Angles." "They should be angels," said Gregory, "for they have the faces of angels." Then he asked what country they came from; and when they told him, he said, "The praises of God shall some day be sung in that land."

Years went on, and the good monk became the Pope of Rome; but he did not forget the poor slave children. When he heard that an English king of Kent had married a Christian princess, named Bertha, he sent a monk named Augustine, with forty other monks, to go and preach the gospel to the English. The monks landed in Kent; then they sent word to the king, telling him why they had come.

King Ethelbert said he would hear what they had to say, but he dared not let them into his house for fear they might bewitch him. So he sat on his throne under an oak tree; and the monks, marching two by two over the green fields, bearing a silver cross and

a banner of the Saviour, came before him, singing as they came.

When Ethelbert had heard all they had to say about the true God, he said to them, "Your words and promises seem fair, but they are new and strange to me, and I cannot at once give up the gods of my fathers. But you may stay in this land, and I will give you food and shelter; and if any man will believe as you believe, I will let him." And he gave them his own house to live in; and also gave them a church near it, which had been built in the time of the Romans.



GREGORY AND THE ENGLISH SLAVE-BOYS.

So the monks stayed in Kent, and preached the gospel; and after a time, King Ethelbert and many of his people became Christians. From Kent the faith spread and spread; and one hundred years after the landing of Augustine, all England had become Christian. So the worship of Thor and Woden passed away; and the "little angels" in the market-

place of Rome thus became the messengers of a higher and a nobler faith.

We must, however, remember that many years before the time of Augustine, soldiers and merchants who came from the Continent began to introduce Christianity into Britain. Scarcely anything is known of its progress in the island. There is no doubt that in different parts of the country rude churches were built and other sacred structures were erected, in which the people kept up a regular worship.

7. HOW THE OLD ENGLISH PEOPLE LIVED.

About the Time of King Alfred.

HOW did England look during old English times? How did the people live? Let me tell you. The greater part of the country was still covered with forests, and a very small part of the land was under cultivation. Yet enough of barley and wheat seems to have been grown to meet the wants of the people. The forests still swarmed with wild animals, such as the wolf, boar, deer, fox, hare, and rabbit.

At the head of the old English people stood the king. In early times he did not have much power, but as the various tribes became united and formed one nation, the power of the king began to increase.

To keep the king in proper state, great tracts of land were given to him, and he had certain rights in the forests, woods, and mines. When he traveled with his household he had food and shelter free of expense, for himself and his servants, at all places where he stopped.

When a king was crowned, all the people above twelve years of age took an oath to be obedient to him. The king in turn took an oath that he would treat all his subjects with kindness and justice, whatever their condition.

The people were divided into two great classes,—freemen and slaves. The freemen were divided into two kinds. The first were men of the highest rank. They were either descended from princes, or had great property, or had done great service to the king. These nobles, when not at war with each other, spent their time in hunting and hawking.

The second class of freemen were the men who cultivated the land, or worked at trades in the towns. They generally lived on the lands of some lord, that is, a man of the first class. From these lands they could not remove, nor could they be turned away so long as they paid rent.

The lowest division of the English people were slaves. They belonged entirely to their masters, just as a horse or a cow does at the present day. The master of a slave could kill him if he liked, and there was no one to call him to account. If a slave ran away he could be chased like a wild beast, and if caught, flogged to death; or if a woman slave ran away she might be burned to death.

Sometimes a kindly master would give his slaves their freedom or, if a slave could earn money enough he might buy his freedom. Thus King Alfred, when he died, ordered in his will that all his slaves should be set free.

The English slaves had to watch the sheep and cattle and look after the large herds of swine that

were taken to the forests to feed upon beechnuts and acorns.

Large numbers of sheep were raised, and the country exported much wool. The chief crops were wheat, barley, rye, and oats. Orchards were abundant, and great numbers of beehives were kept. A drink known as mead was made from honey.

The principal food of the poor was bacon and barley bread. The rich ate wheaten bread. Fish was also largely eaten. From the fens, or marshy pools, were taken an immense number of eels. Salmon were plentiful in the rivers, while on the sea coast herring were taken in large quantities.

In the houses of the great men was a large room or hall, with a long table in the center. At the end of the hall was a raised platform on which there was another table. At this sat the lord and his family, while the servants sat at the lower table according to their rank.

The old English people had knives, but no forks. Joints of meat were handed round on spits, or iron rods on which the meat was supported over the fire to roast; and each person carved for himself. The bones were tossed on the floor to the dogs.

The men were not only great eaters, but great drinkers, and large quantities of mead and ale were used at their feasts, and drunkenness was very common. In very early English times the tables in the halls were removed at night, and the men slept on the floor; but

in later times beds were used. These were sacks filled with straw or other soft materials.

The houses of the poor were built of mud and thatched with straw; stonework was used only in the building of castles and churches.

The men wore a shirt and a kind of frock which came down to the knee. This was probably the origin of the smock frock, still worn in some of the country districts of England. They had long stockings fitting rather tight to the legs, leather shoes, and a belt around the waist. Their hair was long, and they had long beards and mustaches. The women wore long, loose garments which reached to the ground. Men and women wore necklaces, bracelets, and rings. The women of rank were very clever at needlework, and were also skilled in spinning and weaving wool.

8. HOW KING ALFRED RULED ENGLAND.

Born 849, died 901. Reigned 30 Years.

I MUST tell you now of the good King Alfred, the wisest, the bravest, and the best of all the English kings. I am sure you will like to read about him, for his goodness, wisdom, and bravery earned for him the name of Great. In English history he is always known as King Alfred the Great. His father was King Ethelwulf, and his mother's name was Osburgh.

There is a story about Alfred's mother which you will like to know. The little prince was taught to hunt and ride and shoot with bow and arrows before he was taught to read. But his mother used to read to him the old English songs which told of the brave deeds of his forefathers, and Alfred loved to sit at her feet and listen to them.

An old writer tells us that the queen had a book of songs with beautiful pictures in it, and letters richly painted in gold. One day, calling her three boys to her, she said, "I will give this pretty book to the one who can read it first." "Will you indeed, mother?" said Alfred, who was the youngest. "Yes, dear boy, I will," said the queen.

Then Alfred went at once and found a master, and sat down to study the book day after day, until he could

read it through. So he won it as his prize, and was proud of it all his life.

Alfred was a young man twenty-three years old when he came to the throne. But hard days were in store for the young king. Fierce bands of sea-robbers called Danes, or Northmen, had for many years been making war upon the English. They came from Denmark, Norway, and the countries near by. They belonged to the same race as the Angles and Saxons of three or four centuries before, and spoke almost the same language.

They were strong, brave, and venturesome, and loved to sail over the seas in their long, black ships. They laughed at the wind and the storm, and boastfully called themselves sea-kings, because they thought they were masters of the mighty deep.

At first when they came, these fierce sea-rovers used to land on some lonely coast or sail up some quiet river and steal grain and cattle and go away. But after a time they came in swarms, drove the people from their homes, and took their lands and settled upon them.

When Alfred became king, the Danes had settled in the north and east of England, and were trying to conquer the whole kingdom. So the young king had to fight them. For some years he kept them in check and beat them in many a battle.

One night when the English were feasting, the Danes burst in upon them and slew a great many.

King Alfred with a little band fled for safety to a lonely spot, and there, among marshes and woods, he hid himself till he could muster an army to lead against the Danes. He was almost in despair. He wandered about in the woods, and agreed to work for a peasant if he would give him food and a bed of straw.

One day, so the story runs, the cotter's wife, leaving the hut, told the king to watch and turn the cakes which were baking on the hearth. Alfred sat down beside the fire, mending his bow and sharpening his arrows, — all the time thinking and planning how he could free his country from the Danes. He would beat them yet he felt certain.

ALFRED IN THE SHEPHERD'S COTTAGE.

While he was thus musing, the good woman came back and stood beside him. "What have you done with my cakes?" she cried, angrily. "Every one of them is burnt. You 'd have been glad enough to eat them." Alfred smiled and begged her pardon. The woman little thought that her careless servant was her king.

One day, as King Alfred was in a shepherd's cot

thinking how he could overcome the Danes, one of his trusty spies came running to him with good news. Some of the Danes had been beaten back in trying to land on the west coast, and their black, raven flag had been taken by the English. This was good news indeed.

The raven flag, I must tell you, was a famous banner that had been woven by the daughter of a great Danish sea-king. It was thought to have magic power. The Danes said they could tell by the way the raven held its wings whether they were to win or lose a battle. So you may be sure that the Danes were downhearted when their raven banner was lost; and the English were in high spirits, and felt sure that better days were coming.

King Alfred now came out from his hiding-place. He was very cheerful and full of hope. He felt that this was the time to strike a blow at the Danes. So he dressed himself as a minstrel, took his harp with him and stole by night into the Danish camp. He could play well upon the harp, and the Danish king, Gothrun, and his soldiers were much pleased with him, and urged him to play for them while they drank and sang and made merry.

But all the time Alfred kept his eyes and ears open. He strolled about the camp for two or three days, counting the Danish soldiers, and seeing what were their strong points and what were their weak ones.

ALFRED DESCRIBING THE DANISH CAMP TO HIS FOLLOWERS.

When he had learned all that he wished, he stole back to his hiding-place, and sent word to all the men of the west to meet him on a certain day in the forest. Then he led them against the Danes, and there was a great battle fought. The Danes were badly beaten, and had to beg for peace.

King Alfred granted them peace on these terms: they were to march out of the west country, and settle down quietly in the east, and become Christians and live as English subjects. And this they did. The Danish king, Gothrun, was baptized, and King Alfred was his godfather. Then the Danish king went, with all his men, to live in the eastern part of the country. He always looked up to King Alfred as his master, and was a good friend to him ever after.

The good king now took steps to make his kingdom strong and happy. He built stone forts and castles. He also took care to see that all his fighting men were well drilled, and ready at any time to turn out at the call of danger. He made war-ships of such size and speed that the roving Danes would not dare to meet them in battle. Thus England was made safe and strong on land and on sea. Alfred was the first English king who defeated the dreaded Danes at sea.

King Alfred having made his kingdom peaceful, then tried to make his people happy by framing good and just laws. He took every care that his judges should rightly carry them out, and do all in their power to

protect the poor. All who stole or did wrong were punished severely.

King Alfred built schools and hired learned men from other countries to come over and teach in them. He himself even taught in the schools; and he turned many of the old Latin books into English, so that his people could read them easily.

Alfred let no man be idle, and was never idle himself. He set himself a task for every hour of the day; and as there were no clocks then, he used to mark his time by the burning of candles. He had them made all of the same size so that they would burn for four hours. He put these into lanterns made of thin horn, for the art of making glass had been forgotten. He burnt six of them every day, so that he could always tell pretty nearly what time it was.

This great and good king did not live to be a very old man. He died in the year 901, after a glorious and most useful reign of twenty-nine years. He suffered during nearly all of his life from an ailment which caused him severe pain, but still he went bravely on, working for his people. Though it is nearly a thousand years since he died, yet the name of Alfred the Great is as dear to the English people as if he had died but yesterday. He fully deserves the titles given him by the old writers, who speak of him as "the wisest man of his time, and the darling of the English people."

9. HOW A DANE CAME TO BE KING OF ENGLAND.

Ethelred reigned from 979 to 1016.

A HUNDRED years had come and gone since the days of the good King Alfred; and there sat on the throne of England a king named Ethelred. Now Ethelred was a poor, weak, good-for-nothing king. He was always doing the wrong thing at the wrong time. When the right time came he was never ready, and so men gave him the nickname of Ethelred the Unready.

In his day, as in the days of King Alfred, Danish pirates came sailing over the sea and made war upon the English. They set fire to villages along the coast; they robbed the churches and abbeys; they stole from the farmers their wheat and cattle, and those who resisted them were cruelly slain or carried away and sold as slaves.

I have told you that Ethelred was a weak king. I am sorry to add that he was a bit of a coward as well; for instead of fighting the Danes as King Alfred had done, he gave them money to go away. But you may be sure, they soon came back again; and every time they came, the king had to give them more money to get rid of them, for he was never ready to offer them battle.

At last Ethelred made up his mind to do a cruel and terrible deed, the like of which was never done on English soil before or since. You know already that, at one time and another, a great many Danes had settled in England. Some were hardy fishermen, some were quiet farmers, others were busy tradesmen; and most of them were honest, hard-working, harmless people.

Now King Ethelred sent word in secret that the English, on a certain day, were to rise up and murder these Danes. And when the day came, every Dane that could be found, young and old, soldiers and babies, men and women, was put to the sword.

Among those who fell was a fair and noble lady named Gunhild. Though she was own sister to Sweyn, king of Denmark, her noble birth did not save her. She saw her dear husband and her darling boy dragged out and slain before her eyes. She told her murderers with her dying lips that her brother of Denmark would avenge her death. And so he did. When the news flew to Denmark that Gunhild had been slain, King Sweyn, "of the forked beard," swore to pluck the crown from the brow of Ethelred.

He raised an army and a mightier fleet of ships than ever yet had sailed to England. In all his army there was not a slave or an old man, but every soldier was a free man and the son of a free man and in the prime of life. All had sworn to be avenged upon the English people for this cruel deed.

THE DANISH SEA-KING COMES TO AVENGE HIS SISTER'S MURDER.

So the sea-kings came to England in many great ships, each bearing the flag of its own captain. Golden eagles, ravens, dragons, dolphins, beasts of prey threatened England from the prows of those ships, as they came onward through the water and threw their grim shadows upon the waves.

The ship of Sweyn, the king, was long and shaped somewhat like a serpent, and was called the "Great Dragon." For three years the Danes carried fire and sword from one end of the land to the other; their path could be traced by ruined churches, burnt villages, and all the horrors of a bloody war.

There was but one man of note in these wretched times who was true to his country and to the feeble king. He was a priest, and a brave one. For twenty years the Archbishop of Canterbury defended his city against the Danes.

At last, when a traitor in the town threw the gates open and admitted the enemy, he said: "I will not buy my life with money that must be wrested from the suffering people. Do with me what you please!"

Again and again, he steadily refused to buy his release with gold wrung from the poor. After a time the Danes lost all patience, and having met at a drunken merrymaking, had him brought into the feasting hall. "Now, Bishop," they said, "we want gold!" He looked around on the crowd of angry faces, from the shaggy beards close to him to the shaggy beards against the

walls, where men stood on tables to see him over the heads of the others; and he knew that his time was come.

"I have no gold," said he.

"Get it, Bishop!" they all thundered.

"That, I have often told you, I will not," said he.

They crowded around him, threatening violence; but the brave priest stood unmoved. Then one man struck him; then another; at last a cruel soldier killed the noble old man with his battle-axe. Oh, but it was a pitiful deed!

Now Sweyn had a son, a famous warrior, named Canute; and Ethelred, too, had a son, so hardy and brave that they called him Edmund Ironside. So Canute and Ironside — for Ethelred had fled across the seas — fought for the kingdom. It was a hard fight; the men of the east sided with Ironside, and the men of the west with Canute.

Oh, unhappy England, what cruel days were these! At last Ironside, who was a big man, proposed to Canute, who was a little man, that they should fight in single combat. If Canute had been the big man, he would probably have said "Yes," but being a little man, he said decidedly "No." However, he said he was willing to share the kingdom with Ironside. This was done, and both were glad, for both were tired of so much bloodshed.

10. KING CANUTE, THE DANE.

Canute reigned from 1016 to 1035.

NOT long after the fierce contest we have just read about, King Edmund died. Canute alone ruled the land. He was a cruel king, and used to say to his fighting men: "He who brings me the head of an enemy shall be dearer to me than a brother." And he was so severe in hunting down his enemies that he must have had a pretty large family of these dear brothers.

After the land was at peace he treated his people more kindly and made wise and just laws. In fact, the people were better off under their Danish king than if he had been an Englishman like themselves. They learned to like him so much that they very willingly followed him in his foreign wars, and with their help he made himself master of Norway and Sweden. He thus became a very powerful monarch, ruling over four countries, — Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and England.

But as Canute grew older, he felt very sorry for having shed so much blood and wasted so much land, so he made up his mind to go to Rome and ask for pardon. To show his sorrow he went on foot all the way, with a staff in his hand and a pack on his back.

When he returned his friends were very fond of flattering him and of telling him how great a king he

was. Once one of them said: "You are the king of kings and the lord of the sea as well as of the land." Canute said nothing at the time.

One day, as he was walking by the seashore and his friends were talking in this way, he ordered a chair to be brought and placed at the edge of the waves at the time when the tide was rising. The king took his seat in the chair while his courtiers stood round, and he said to the waves: "The land on which I sit belongs to me; and as for you, O waves, I am your lord and master also. I command you, therefore, to come no nearer, nor dare to wet my feet!"

KING CANUTE REBUKING HIS COURTIERS.

But the tide, heeding not, came dashing on, and in a little while had washed over the feet of Canute and his nobles. Then Canute turned to these foolish flatterers and said: "You now see that I am not master of the

waves. Learn, then, that the power of kings is as nothing to the power of God! He alone rules in heaven, in earth, and on the sea."

The courtiers hung their heads, looked foolish, and said nothing. From that day, it is said, Canute wore his crown no more. We can almost see them all on the seashore together,—the king in good humor with his own wisdom, and the courtiers quite overcome by it.

King Canute built up the churches and abbeys which his fathers had burned. He was fond of making visits to the holy places. But of all the abbeys which the king raised up, he loved none so well as Ely; and he often went there on the great feast days of the year. The abbey of Ely stood on an island amid the marshes, and the king could get there only by water.

One evening as he was rowed to the abbey, the chant of the monks, singing their evening hymn, floated sweetly over the quiet waters; and as it fell upon the king's ears, his heart was so glad that he began to sing. He made the song himself; and this is how it ran:

"Merry the monks of Ely sing
As by them rows Canute, the king;
Row, men, to the land more near,
That we these good monks' songs may hear."

Other verses followed, and were often sung in after years by the monks of Ely, who told with pride of the many gifts which the king had given them in memory of that day.

Another time it was winter when the king and his men set out for Ely. The water was frozen, but no one was sure that the ice would bear. While the king and those with him stood in doubt, up came a country-fellow who was so fat that the people near Ely called him "Pudding."

"Are you afraid to cross?" said Pudding. "Let me go before the king."

"Do!" said the king, "and I will follow you. You are a big and heavy man, I am small and light; and what will bear you will surely bear me."

So Pudding crossed over, and the king gave him a good slice of land for his pains.

Canute liked to be flattered. A poor poet had made a song in his praise, but it was very short. Because it was so short the king could hardly be kept from putting the poet to death.

The Danish king was very fond of hunting, and wanted to have for himself all the hunting in the land. So he had laws made which kept other men from killing the wild animals. Such laws are called Game Laws, or Forest Laws. In Canute's time, if any free Englishman killed a stag, he was put in prison. If a serf or slave did so, he was put to death.

After the death of Canute, two of his sons sat in turn on the English throne; but they ruled so badly, that the English people wished to have one of the sons of Ethelred for their king.

11. THE STORY OF THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

In the Year 1066.

WE have told you how Canute, the Dane, became king of England. His sons, too, were kings of England; but when they died the crown came back to Ethelred's son, King Edward the Good.

But King Edward had no children, so at his death the wise men of the nation had to choose a king. They chose the wisest and bravest man in all the land—Earl Harold—and made him their king.

But there was another man who wanted to be king. This was William, duke of Normandy; or, as we now call him, William the Conqueror. He was a great and brave man who had come of a noble race of sea-kings. These were the Normans, or Northmen. They were kinsmen of the Danes and Angles. They, too, had been fierce pirates; but they had at last settled down in the north of France, and had come to be the ablest and bravest men in all the world.

Duke William, as we have told you, had set his heart on the crown of England. He said that King Edward, who was a cousin of his, had told him that he would leave it to him, and that Harold himself had sworn to help him to the throne. So, when he heard that Harold

was made king, he was very angry, and raised a great army to come and conquer England.

When King Harold heard what William was going to do, he kept his ships sailing up and down the channel, and set his soldiers to guard the south coast, where he thought the Normans would land.

But while Harold was at Hastings waiting for Duke William to come, bad news came from the north. His wicked brother Tostig, who had been driven from the country, had come back to make war upon him. As soon as Harold heard it, he set out for Yorkshire with all the troops he could muster, and marched day and night till he came up with his brother. In a great battle that was fought he beat him.

King Harold gave a feast at York in honor of the victory; but while they sat at the table, a man rushed in, splashed with mud and tired with long riding, and told the king that the Normans had landed in England. "It is bad news," said King Harold; "had I been there, they would not have set foot on land; but I could not be there and here too."

He broke up the feast at once, and telling his soldiers to hurry after him, set off for London as fast as he could go. Within a week his army was ready.

The news was true. The Normans had been tossed about by contrary winds, and some of their ships had been wrecked. A part of their own shore, to which they had been driven back, was strewn with Norman

bodies. But they had once more set sail, led by the duke's own galley, upon the prow of which the figure of a golden boy stood pointing toward England. By day the banner of the three lions of Normandy, the diverse-colored sails, the gilded vanes, the many decorations of this gorgeous ship glistened in the sun; by night a light sparkled like a star at her masthead.

LANDING OF THE NORMANS.

And now the whole Norman force, hopeful and strong on English ground, was encamped near Hastings.

There is an old story that

when the Norman duke took his first step on English soil, he stumbled and fell forward. Then a great cry arose from his men, for they said, "This is an evil sign; as our leader hath fallen, so will our cause fail." But William, with his ready wit, turned his mishap to good account. "See!" he called out, as he arose with his hands full of English soil, — "see, I have taken a grip of this land with both of my hands!" And his followers laughed and were in good spirits once more.

On a bright October morning in the year 1066, the English and the Norman armies stood face to face on the fields near Hastings. Harold's troops stood on the slope of a hill, every man on foot. In front of them they had driven into the ground stakes and branches of trees, and set up their shields against them like a wall.

The men of Kent and the king's own guards were in the front line. Over them floated the royal flag, upon which was woven in gold the image of an English soldier fighting bravely.

Under this flag Harold took his place on foot, and there also stood the warriors who fought so well against Tostig. These men wore coats upon which were sewed rings of iron, and their heads were covered with helmets shaped like a cone, having a piece in front to protect the nose. They were armed with heavy battle-axes, swords, and darts, and carried on their left arms shields having the shape of a kite.

The rest of the English were armed with whatever weapons they could find. Some had nothing better than clubs, iron-pointed stakes, stone hammers, pitch-forks, and such rude weapons; but one and all had stout hearts. "Stand fast, my men," said King Harold, "and ply your battle-axes well; if you break your ranks we are lost!"

It was about nine o'clock on a Saturday morning that the Norman archers began the battle. Their arrows flew like rain before the wind. But the English, behind their wall of shields, cared no more for their arrows than they would have cared for a shower of rain.

The Norman foot soldiers with their long pikes came next; but they went back down the hill faster than they came up. Then the Norman horsemen in steel armor rode up, and dashed furiously upon the English. But Harold and his brave troops stood as firm as a rock, and horses and men fell thick and fast under the stroke of their deadly battle-axes.

The Normans turned and fled. The word went round that the duke was slain, and the Normans began to give way all along their line. But the next moment William was seen driving back the troops, and calling out to them, as he drew up his helmet, "Look! I am alive, and by God's help, I will still conquer!"

From nine in the morning till sunset the fight went on. Again and again did the Normans rush up the slope of the hill, and again and again were they driven

back. Thus throughout the day the battle went against the Normans. Duke William fought in the thick of the fight as brave as a lion. Two horses were killed under him. He felt that unless he could draw the English away from their place on the hill, the battle was lost. So he ordered his horsemen to feign retreat.

When the English saw this they rushed down the slope in pursuit, forgetting Harold's command to keep behind their defences. Then the Norman horse turned suddenly round and fell upon them with great slaughter. Up the hill and through the fences they rode, and dashed among the English host. Harold and his chosen band fought fiercely around their standard.

Twilight was fast drawing nigh when Duke William turned and said to his archers: "Shoot your arrows high up into the air, that they may fall upon the faces of the English." They did so; an arrow struck the English king in the eye, and he fell dead. This was the turning-point of the battle. The English fled, and left the Normans masters of the field.

Thus ended one of the greatest battles ever fought on English ground. Thus the rule of the old English kings came to an end, and a Norman wore the crown of England.

12. THE DEATH OF THE RED KING.

In the Year 1100.

WILLIAM RUFUS, or William the Second, was the son of William the Conqueror. Rufus is a Latin word which means red; and people gave the king this nickname because he had red hair and a ruddy face. He was neither a good king nor a good man. He was hard and cruel to all his subjects, and very harsh to the poor.

When this wicked king and his friends were traveling and they came to a farmhouse, they would make the farmer kill his cow or his sheep or his pig, and would have it roasted at the fire and would eat it all. They would then drink the poor man's ale, and if there was any left, they would wash their horses' feet with it. After sleeping in the farmer's house all night, they would, out of sheer cruelty, set fire to it in the morning.

Both Rufus and his father were very fond of hunting. His father had driven out the farmers and laborers from their homes throughout a wide tract of land in the south of England, wasted the gardens and the fields of wheat, and left the land free for deer and wild boars to roam about in it. This tract of land was, and still is, called the New Forest.

The poor people whose homes had been laid waste believed that this forest was enchanted. They said that in thunderstorms and on dark nights demons appeared, moving beneath the branches of the gloomy trees. They said that a terrible spectre had foretold to Norman hunters that the Red King should be punished there. It was a lonely forest, accursed in the people's hearts for the wicked deeds that had been done to make it, and no man liked to stray there.

But in reality it was like any other forest. There were hillsides covered with rich fern, on which the morning dew sparkled beautifully; there were brooks where the deer went down to drink, or over which the whole herd bounded, flying from the arrows of the hunters; there were sunny glades and gloomy places where but little light came through the leaves.

The songs of the birds in the New Forest were pleasanter to hear than the shouts of fighting men outside; and even when the Red King and his court came hunting through its thick woods, cursing loud and riding hard, with a jingle of stirrups and bridles and knives and daggers, they did much less harm there than among the poor people.

One bright day in July, the Red King rose early in the morning to hunt in the New Forest. He was told it was a Saint's Day. "What care I?" he said; "the better the day, the better the deed!" One of the hunting party had had a fearful dream, and warned the king not

to go. "What!" he cried, "do you take me for an Englishman with your dreams? Get the horses ready, and let us be off!"

As they were about to start, an arrow-maker brought him a bundle of new arrows well made and fully a yard long. The king was delighted, and bought the whole of them, and gave them to one of his friends named Sir Walter Tyrrel. "There," he said, "you are a capital marksman; you will shoot well with these, I am sure!" He and his friends now galloped off into the woods to hunt the red deer.

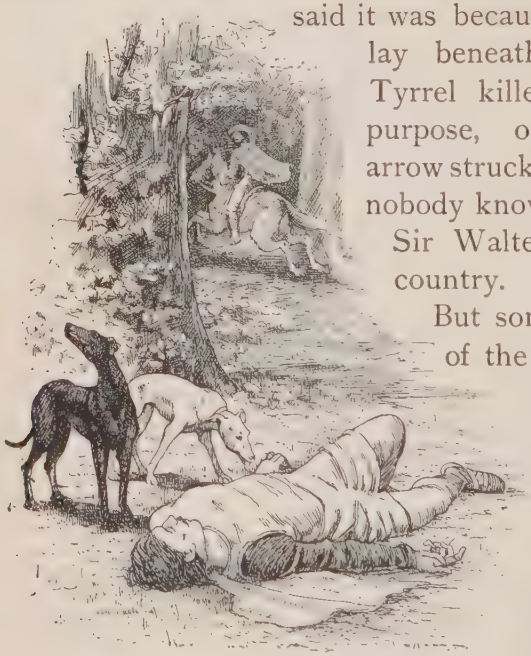
By and by the party scattered, and the king was left with only one companion, Sir Walter Tyrrel. Soon the king caught sight, through the underwood, of the branching horns of a tall stag. An oak stood between him and the stag; he could not shoot the stag himself, and he shouted to Tyrrel to draw.

The knight drew his bow; the arrow struck the trunk of the oak, glanced off, and pierced the breast of the king who fell dead from his horse. The knight had shot too well, and the arrows the king had given him were too good.

Tyrrel galloped off at once to the coast and escaped in a vessel to France.

That evening a charcoal-burner of the New Forest came upon the body of a man lying in a pool of blood. It was the Red King! He put the dead body on his rough and grimy cart, and carried it to Winchester,

where it was buried in the cathedral without funeral rites or weeping eyes. After a few years, the tower above the wicked king's tomb fell in, and the people said it was because so foul a body lay beneath it. Whether Tyrrel killed the king on purpose, or whether the arrow struck him by accident, nobody knows. At any rate, Sir Walter fled from the country.



DEATH OF THE RED KING.

But some said that one of the poor people, who had been turned out of house and home for the sake of the king's sport, had lain in wait for the Red King and had taken this fearful revenge. But no one will ever know for certain how the death of this bold, bad king came about.

William Rufus was the third member of the Conqueror's family who was killed in the New Forest. No wonder, then, that the people of those days thought the great hunting-ground a doomed spot for the royal family.

13. THE LOSS OF THE "WHITE SHIP."

In the Year 1120.

HENRY, the youngest son of the Conqueror, was in his turn made king of England; and as he was the first king of that name, he was called Henry the First. He was also known as the "Fine Scholar," because, unlike most princes of those times, he could read and write.

But though clever, he was a bold and cunning man. He cared very little for his word, and took any means to gain his ends. Henry had an only son, Prince William, whom he loved very much; and when the prince was eighteen years old he took him to Normandy and made him duke over the Normans.

When the king and his son came to the coast to take ship again to England, up came a sea captain named Fitz-Stephen, and said to the king, "My father, O king, was the captain of the good ship that bore your father over the sea to the conquest of England. I also have a fine vessel, named the "White Ship," rowed by fifty sturdy sailors. There she is, rocking in the bay, and ready to put to sea. Let me, I pray you, steer you to England, as my father steered your father in the days gone by."

"I am sorry," said the king, "that I cannot take your offer, for I have already chosen my vessel; but my son, the young prince, shall sail with you in the 'White Ship,' and you shall follow me to England."

The king's ship set sail; and Prince William and his half-sister, with a company of knights and ladies, went on board the "White Ship." The young prince called Fitz-Stephen to him, and said, "Bring out three casks of wine, and give them to the fifty bold rowers who are to row us across the sea. Bid them drink and be merry, for we shall not start till midnight." And the rowers drank the three casks of wine, and the prince, with the knights and ladies, danced on deck by the light of the full moon.

At last the anchor was lifted, the square sail was hoisted, the fifty bold rowers sat down to their oars, and merrily sped the "White Ship" over the moonlit sea. But there was not a sober sailor on board. Fitz-Stephen had the helm. The gay young nobles and the beautiful ladies, wrapped in mantles of various bright colors to protect them from the cold, talked, laughed, and sang. The prince encouraged the fifty sailors to row harder yet for the honor of the "White Ship." On she went like an arrow.

But hark! a shock — a fearful crash! A terrific cry breaks from three hundred hearts. It is the cry which the people in the distant vessel of the king hear faintly on the water. The "White Ship" has struck upon a

rock, is filling — going down! What is to be done? A cry of despair rises from the gay lords and lovely ladies on board the ill-fated vessel.

Fitz-Stephen hurried the prince into a boat, with some few nobles. "Push off," he whispered, "and row to the land. It is not far, and the sea is smooth. The rest of us must die."

But as they rowed away from the sinking ship the prince heard the voice of his half-sister Marie, calling to him from the ship. "Stop, men!" he cried. "Row back to the ship, I cannot leave my sister to perish." So back they rowed and drew near to the ship; but so many then leapt into the boat that it sank under the heavy load. And at the same instant the "White Ship" itself went down.

There were two men who held on to a broken mast. One of them, who had on a warm sheepskin coat, was a butcher called Berthold; the other was a young noble named Godfrey. As they drifted with the tide on that cold December night, they saw another man come swimming towards them. When they caught sight of his long hair and heard him speak, they knew him to be Fitz-Stephen.

"What has become of the prince?" said the captain.

"He is drowned," said the men, "and his sister also, and all who were with them in the boat."

"Oh, woe is me!" said the captain; and, throwing up his arms, he sank under the waves. The two men

clung to the mast for some hours; but at last the young noble said, "I feel weak and faint. My hands have grown as cold as ice, and I cannot hold on any

KING HENRY IS TOLD OF THE LOSS OF THE "WHITE SHIP."

longer." As he let go his grip, he called out to the butcher, "Good-bye, friend, and God keep you safe!"

In the gray of the morning, the people on shore saw the poor butcher, with his arm round the broken spar, and they put out a boat and brought him safe to land.

He was the only one left to tell the sad tale of the "White Ship."

For three days no one dared to tell the king of his great loss. But at last a little boy was sent in to him. On his knees and with tears in his eyes, the boy told the king that the "White Ship" had gone down, and that his son, Prince William, had been drowned.

The king fell upon the floor at the news, and lay there as if dead. His only son, the joy of his heart, was no more. Time brought new joys and new cares, but it is said King Henry never smiled again.

The only child left to the king was a daughter named Matilda. Before his death, he did his utmost to get the nobles to support her claim to the throne, though a woman had never yet reigned alone in England.

As soon as King Henry was dead, all the plans and schemes he had cunningly made came to nothing. His daughter Matilda was not made queen, because several of the great nobles did not care to have a woman reign over them in days when there were so many wars. So they chose Henry's nephew Stephen, whose mother was the daughter of William the Conqueror. This took place in the year 1135.

14. THE NORMANS AND HOW THEY LIVED.

About 800 Years ago.

AFTER the battle of Hastings four foreign kings reigned in England, one after the other; that is to say, the three kings whom we have read about, — William the Conqueror, the Red King, and his brother Henry, — together with a very wicked king named Stephen. These four are often called the Norman kings of England. Their rule covers a period of eighty-eight years (1066–1154).

The coming of the Normans made a great change in England. In the first place, all the chief men in the land were strangers who could not speak English. Hence there were two languages spoken in the country at the same time. The king, the court, and the nobles spoke French, while the rest of the people spoke English.

The Normans looked down upon the English as people very much beneath them, while the English looked upon their new masters with hatred. Very severe laws had to be made to prevent the English from murdering the Normans when they found them alone and unprotected. Not only did the Normans take the best of the land for themselves, but all the chief offices in the nation were held by them or their descendants.

After awhile the sons and grandsons of the Norman barons learned to speak English, and began to look upon England as their real home. Then they became more friendly with the English, and took pride in calling themselves Englishmen.

Under these Norman kings many castles were built for the dwellings of the nobles and other great men who were strangers in the land and wanted such places for safety. A hill or rock or some high ground near a river was usually chosen as a site upon which to build a baron's stronghold. This was further strengthened by a deep ditch, or moat, as it was called, dug around the walls. The chief building where the baron and his family lived was called the Keep. Between this and the massive outer walls was an open space of ground, or court, where stood the stables for the horses and houses for the servants.

The entrance to the castle grounds was barred by a strong gateway, which, on account of the ditch, could be reached only from the outside by a drawbridge. The passage through the gateway could be closed by a spiked iron grating let down from above; and the archway was pierced with holes, through which melted lead or boiling pitch could be poured upon an enemy trying to force an entrance. The gray ruins of many of these buildings are still to be seen in various parts of England.

The Norman lords had but little furniture in their

dwellings. The chief room was the large hall where the family and servants took their meals together. A long, rough table and some rude benches were all the articles it contained. Carpets for the floor were then unknown; but straw in winter and grass or rushes in summer were strewn in plenty upon the ground.

The lord's bedroom had a few stools and a straw bed in it. The ladies of the family had nothing better. The servants had to put up with a mat spread upon the floor, or else a heap of straw.

If the houses of the rich were so bare of furniture, wretched indeed must have been the homes of the common people.

Their houses were small, rude cabins, built of wood, thatched with straw, and plastered with mud. They had only one or two rooms, in which might be found an iron pot for cooking food, a pitcher, and a table, with a log or two to serve as stools. Chimneys were not in use either in the castle or in the lowly dwelling. A fire of wood, when needed, burned on the hearth, and the smoke was left to find its way out through an opening in the roof.

The food of the common people was simpler than that of the upper classes. The bread of the working-man was brown in color, and made of rye, oats, or barley; but the rich man ate white bread made of wheat flour. The brown bread, however, if less sweet than the other, was very good and wholesome.

In the baron's kitchen the art of cooking was studied with much care. There were many dainty dishes of all kinds of meats. Fish of many sorts from the rivers, game from the fields and woods, and fowls that strutted in the farmyards were brought there in plenty. The peacock and the crane—birds which are now rare—were favorite dishes. On great feast days the wild boar's head was thought a royal dainty. It was carried into the castle hall with much show of joy, and usually a song was sung as it was laid on the high table; but if such music was wanting, a joyful shout took its place.

Besides the food we have just named, the richer people fed on the flesh of the ox, cow, calf, sheep, and pig. But when these meats were brought on the table they were called by Norman names. Thus the flesh of the ox and the cow was named beef; the flesh of the calf was called veal; that of the sheep was known as mutton; and that of the pig was called pork.

There was not much garden produce in those days, and fruits were also few. Apples and pears grew in the orchards and gooseberries in the garden; but oranges, which are now so common, were never seen in the land. Potatoes, cabbages, carrots, turnips, celery, lettuce, which are now grown in every poor man's plot of ground, were then unknown in England.

15. RICHARD THE LION-HEARTED.

King Richard reigned from 1189 to 1199.

THERE was once a king of England who was so brave and daring that men called him Richard the Lion-hearted. He was a big, strong, handsome man, with great blue eyes and bright yellow hair. No other man in England could use his battle-axe; no man could keep on his feet or hold on to his saddle against the thrust of his lance.

He was so fond of war that as soon as he was made king he set off to the Holy Land to fight against the Saracens, who had taken the Holy City from the Christians. Many other Christian princes took part in this Crusade, as it was called, but none of them were so brave as King Richard. Mounted on his good steed, with his huge battle-axe in hand, he would rush alone into the midst of the Saracens and cut them down as a reaper cuts down grain.

They were so afraid of him at last that at the very sight of him they would put spurs to their horses and fly for their lives. Marching or camping, the Christian army had always to strive with the hot air of the glaring desert, or with the Saracen soldiers led by the brave Saladin, or with both together. Sickness and death, battle and wounds beset them on every

hand; but through every hardship King Richard fought like a giant and worked like a common laborer.

No one admired this king's renown for bravery more than Saladin himself, who was a generous and gallant enemy. When Richard lay ill of a fever, Saladin sent him fresh fruits from Damascus and snow from the mountain tops. Courtly messages and compliments were often exchanged between them, and then King Richard would mount his horse and kill as many Saracens as he could; and Saladin would mount his horse and kill as many Christians as he could. In this way the lion-hearted king fought to his heart's content.

But Richard was very proud and had a hasty temper, and some of the other princes began to dislike him. One by one they went away and left him, and at last he did not have troops enough to carry on the war. Then he fell very sick of fever and had to go home to England. The Saracens, you may be sure, were glad to get rid of him.

For years after he had gone, the very name of Richard was a word of fear to the Saracens. Long and long after he was quiet in his grave, the story of Lion-Heart's terrible battle-axe, with twenty pounds of English iron in its mighty head, was told to the Saracen children by their fathers. If a horse shied at a shadow, his master would say: "How now! dost thou see King Richard?" And when Saracen mothers used to rock their babes to sleep, they would say to them: "Hush! Be good, or I will give you to King Richard!"

On his way home, Richard was wrecked in the Gulf of Venice, and found himself in the duke of Austria's country. Now this duke was one of the Christian princes who did not like the English king and had had a quarrel with him in the Holy Land. King Richard knew that the duke would do him harm if he could; so he dressed himself as a poor man, and, taking a boy with him, tried to make his way through Germany.

The brave king fell ill on the way, and had to send the boy to the market to buy food. The boy had a rich glove in his belt, such as only princes and nobles wore; and when the people saw him they guessed who he was, and made him tell where his master was staying. A band of soldiers came to the house, and knocked at the door. Richard leaped from his bed and drew his sword. He was too weak to fight, but he said he would give in to no one but their leader. Then their leader stepped out, and who should it be but the duke of Austria! So the duke got Richard in his power and had him sent to a lonely castle among the hills; and soldiers were set over him with drawn swords to watch him night and day.

There is a pretty story told of how Richard's prison was found out, but I am not sure that it is true. King Richard was fond of music, and had a minstrel called Blondel who was often with him and whom he liked very much. The king and Blondel used to play and sing together, and there was one song they sang that the king himself had composed. When Blondel

heard that King Richard was in prison, he set off for Germany to find him. He went about from castle to castle, but could see nothing or hear nothing of his royal master.

One evening he came to a lonely castle among the hills, and as he felt tired and weary, he sat down under the walls to rest. Soon he heard a sweet voice singing a song that he knew right well. It was the song that the king had composed. Could it be the king that was singing in his dungeon? He strained his ears to listen. When the first verse was ended, Blondel took up the song, and sang the second verse. Then the king — for it was Richard himself — knew that Blondel had found out where he was and that he would soon be free again.

And so he was. His own people loved him so much that they paid a great price for his freedom; and when he landed in England, there was such joy as the people had never known before.

Troubles in England and war abroad again roused the lion-hearted king to action. His old enemy, the king of France, had invaded Normandy. To defend his capital, Rouen, Richard built a fortress on the river Seine.

"I will take it, though its walls be of iron," said Philip.

"I will hold it, were the walls of butter," Richard replied.

He wanted money to carry on the war; but before asking his people in England, as he usually did, to supply his needs, he heard of a treasure in the neighborhood. A great amount of gold, it was said, had been found buried on the land of a certain nobleman. Richard said the treasure was his.

"You may have half, but not the whole," said the

KING RICHARD ORDERS THE BOLD ARCHER TO BE SET FREE.

lord of the castle. Burning with rage, Richard attacked the place. During the contest a young archer named Bertrand took aim at the king and lodged an arrow in

his shoulder. Richard's army stormed the place and hanged every one in it except Bertrand, whom they brought heavily chained to the wounded king.

"What have I done to thee," the king asked, "that thou shouldst take my life?"

"What hast thou done?" replied the young man. "Thou hast killed my father and my two brothers with thine own hand. I have killed thee, and the world is rid of a tyrant."

"I forgive thee, boy," said the dying Richard. "Take off his chains, give him a hundred shillings," he added to his attendants, "and let him go."

The king sank down on his couch and died. His age was forty-two; he had reigned ten years. His last command was not obeyed; for the bold archer was cruelly put to death.

16. THE SAD STORY OF LITTLE PRINCE ARTHUR.

King John reigned from 1199 to 1216.

JOHN, called Lackland, came to the throne after the death of his brother, Richard the Lion-hearted. Now this king was not lion-hearted, but a mean, wicked, selfish, and cruel man. He was very cruel to his own people. He used to seize rich men, throw them into prison, and torture them to make them give him money.

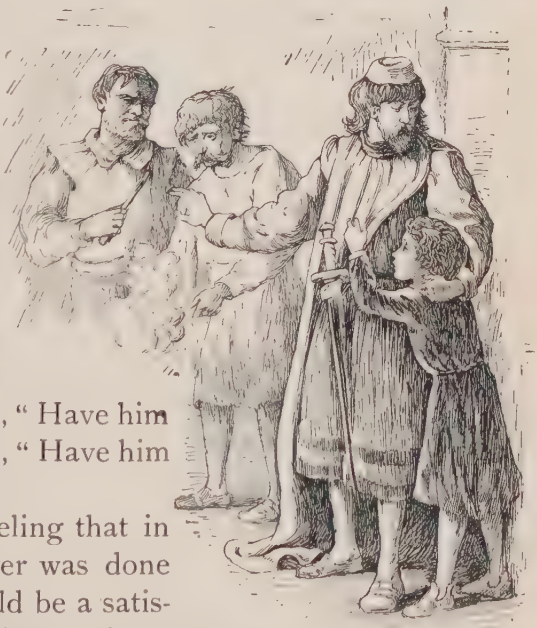
Now many said that Arthur of Brittany, the king's pretty little nephew, ought to have been the king; but Arthur was only twelve years of age, and the English liked to have a grown-up man as king rather than a little boy. The cruel uncle at last made up his mind to get rid of his little nephew. He seized Arthur and shut him up in a gloomy castle called Falaise.

One day while Arthur was in prison at this castle, thinking it strange that one so young should be in so much trouble, and looking at the summer sky and the birds, out of the small window in the deep, dark wall, the door opened softly and he saw his uncle, the king, standing in the shadow of the archway, looking very grim.

"Arthur," said the king, with his wicked eyes more on the stone floor than on his nephew, "will you not trust to the gentleness, the friendship, and the truthfulness of your loving uncle?"

"I will tell my loving uncle that," replied the boy, "when he treats me right. Let him restore to me my kingdom of England, and then come to me and ask the question."

The king looked at him and went out. "Keep that boy close prisoner," said he to the warden of the castle. Then the king took secret counsel with the worst of his nobles how the prince was to be got rid of. Some said, "Put out his eyes and keep him in prison." Others said, "Have him stabbed"; others, "Have him hanged"; others, "Have him poisoned."



PRINCE ARTHUR BEGS HUBERT TO SPARE HIS EYES.

King John, feeling that in any case, whatever was done afterward, it would be a satisfaction to his mind to have those handsome eyes burned out that had looked at him so proudly while his own royal eyes were blinking on the stone floor, sent certain ruffians to Falaise to blind the boy with red-hot irons.

But Arthur shed such piteous tears and so appealed to Hubert de Bourg, the warden of the castle, who had a love for him, and was an honorable, tender man, that Hubert could not bear it. He saved the little prince from torture, and, at his own risk, sent the cruel men away.

The disappointed king next bethought himself of the stabbing suggestion, and proposed it to one William de Bray. "I am a gentleman and not an executioner," said William de Bray, and left the presence of the tyrant with disdain. But it was not difficult for the king to hire a murderer in those days. King John found one for his money and sent him down to the castle of Falaise.

"On what errand dost thou come?" said Hubert to this fellow.

"To dispatch young Arthur," he returned.

"Go back to him who sent thee," answered Hubert, "and say that I will do it!"

King John, knowing very well that Hubert would never do it, but that he sent this reply to save the prince or to gain time, sent messengers to carry the young prisoner to the castle of Rouen.

Arthur was soon forced from the good Hubert, carried away by night, and put in his new prison, where, through his grated window, he could hear the deep waters of the river Seine rippling against the stone wall below.

How Prince Arthur died has never been known, but this story of his death has been told for these many years.

One dark night as he lay sleeping, dreaming perhaps of rescue by those unfortunate friends who were suffering and dying in his cause, he was roused and bade by his jailer to come down the staircase to the foot of the tower. He dressed himself hurriedly and obeyed. When they came to the bottom of the winding stairs and the night air from the river blew upon their faces, the jailer trod upon his torch and put it out.

Then Arthur was pushed hurriedly into a boat; and in that boat he found his uncle and one other man. He knelt to them and prayed them not to murder him. Deaf to his entreaties, they stabbed him and sank his body in the river with heavy stones.

When the spring morning broke, the tower door was closed, the boat was gone, the river sparkled on its way, and never more was there any trace of the poor little prince.

At last things came to such a pass that the strong barons of England took the business into their own hands, met together, and swore that they would bind the king to govern justly and according to the law. They drew up a set of laws, some old and some new, such as they thought would best make sure the liberties of the English people and keep the king from oppressing them as he had always done.

This set of laws is called the "Great Charter." Very few people have done so much lasting good to their country as those barons who drew it up and forced King John to sign it in the year 1215. He was furious

KING JOHN IS FORCED TO SIGN THE GREAT CHARTER.

at being obliged to agree to it, and at first quite refused to do so; but the barons were too strong for him. They not only made him sign the charter, but named

twenty-four barons out of their own number to see that he lived up to its conditions.

Every one thought there was going to be a dreadful civil war. But happily for England and humanity, the death of the wicked king was near. While he was crossing a dangerous quicksand, the tide came up and nearly drowned his army. He and his soldiers escaped; but looking back from the shore when he was safe, he saw the roaring waters sweep down in a torrent, overturn the wagons, horses, and men that carried his treasure, and engulf them in a raging whirlpool.

Cursing and swearing, King John went to an abbey, where the monks set before him quantities of pears and peaches and new cider, of which he ate and drank like a glutton. All night he lay ill of a burning fever, haunted with horrible fears.

Next day his servants put their royal master into a litter and carried him to a castle, where he passed another night of pain and horror. Next day they carried him, with greater difficulty than on the day before, to another castle; and there this cruel and wicked king breathed his last.

17. THE BLACK PRINCE AT THE BATTLE OF CRECY.

In the Year 1346.

ONE of the bravest and best-loved kings that England ever had was King Edward the Third. He was a wise man, just and kind to his own people, but he was very fond of war; and, like most warriors, he was now and then very cruel.

He had a son who was so gentle and brave and handsome that all men loved him; and as he wore black armor, they called him the Black Prince.

When King Edward's uncle, the king of France, died and left no son, Edward thought he had a right to the French throne; and when his cousin was made king instead of him, he went over to France and made war against him.

The Black Prince, who was then sixteen years old, went with his father; and they won many battles against the French, one of which, called the battle of Crecy, I will now tell you about.

The English had come to a village called Crecy, which is in the north of France, when they heard that the French king, with an army three times as large as theirs, was coming up to fight them. So the English king told his soldiers to halt, and with great skill he drew them up in line of battle on a hillside near Crecy.

As he rode from rank to rank, cheering his soldiers and giving his orders, he looked so noble and brave that every man felt sure he would win the battle. When he had seen that his soldiers were in good trim and ready for the fight, he told them to sit down and eat and rest themselves, and gave orders for every man to have a cup of good wine.

As the French came in sight, the English leaped to their feet and set up a great shout, and would have rushed to meet them, but the king kept them in check. "Steady, men, steady!" he said; "there must be no noise, no breaking of your ranks." Then the soldiers stood still and waited in silence for the coming of the French.

But while they were yet afar off, big black clouds came sweeping across the sky, the lightning flashed, the thunder rolled, and the rain came pelting down. Then the sky grew clear again, and the sun shone out bright and warm, for it was a summer afternoon. As soon as the storm was over, the French archers, who were in front of the army, came on with a shout and let fly their arrows at the English. But the rain had wet their bowstrings, and their arrows all fell short.

Then the English archers, who had kept their bows dry in cases, drew their bowstrings to their ears and took good aim. The arrows fell thick and fast, as you have seen the snowflakes fall on a winter day, and pierced the faces and hands and bodies of the Frenchmen

through and through. No men could have stood up against a fire so true and fierce, and the French bowmen soon turned on their heels and ran.

But the French horsemen came bravely on. They spurred their horses into the midst of the English, and kept up a fierce fight till dusk. The Black Prince, who led the English knights, drove the French back again and again; but as fast as they were beaten back, more came on, and it was hard work for the prince to hold his ground. A knight who saw what danger he was in rode off to the king, who was watching the battle, and asked him to send help to the prince.

"Is my son killed or hurt?" said the king.

"No, sire," said the knight.

"Then tell him," said the king, "he shall have no help from me. Let the boy win the battle himself, and the glory of the day shall be his."

The king's words gave the prince and his soldiers more courage. They dashed at the French with all their might. The French king was wounded, and fled for his life; his best captains were cut down and killed; and as darkness came on, the whole French army turned and ran away, leaving thousands of their comrades dead upon the field.

It was quite dark, and camp fires had been lighted and the torches were blazing when the king came forth to meet his son. He took the boy in his arms, and, clasping him to his breast, said to him:

"My son, my dear son, may God give you grace to go on as you have begun. You have done nobly this day, and shown that you are worthy to be a king."

KING EDWARD COMMENDS THE BLACK PRINCE FOR HIS BRAVERY.

The boy looked down and blushed, and said all the praise was due to his father; and when King Edward saw how brave his son had been in battle, and how

modest he was after it, this gave him more joy than the great victory of Crecy.

Among those killed in the battle was the old blind king of Bohemia. When he found that the French were losing, he asked the knights who were near him to lead him into the thick of the fight, so that he might strike at least one good blow. They did so, and he fell.

Young Edward took for his crest, three ostrich feathers, and for his motto, two German words, meaning "I serve"; and these are the crest and motto of the Prince of Wales to this day. You may be sure that the English were very proud of their brave young prince.

This battle of Crecy was only one of the many victories that were won by the Black Prince. His goodness and gentleness made everybody love him, and his valor in battle gave the English hopes that he would prove as good a king as his father. This brave prince did not live to be king of England, but died in 1376. The very next year his father died, having reigned fifty-one years.

18. THE GOOD QUEEN AND THE BRAVE CITIZENS.

In the Year 1347.

KING EDWARD the Third, after his victory at Crecy, marched on till he came to the town of Calais, a seaport on the northeast coast of France.

Now the king was vexed with the people of this town; for many of them were pirates, and had often taken English ships and burned them, and tried to ruin the trade of England on the seas.

But Calais was a very strong city, with thick, high walls and a deep ditch round it; and King Edward thought it would be easier to starve the people out than to break down the walls and take the town by force. So he drew up his soldiers in a circle round Calais, to keep the people from taking food into the city, and gave orders for his fleet to cruise off the coast and stop every ship that tried to get in or out of the port.

Now and again a French ship would steal in by night with bread for the starving people; but what was one shipload or ten shiploads among so many! Yet they held out for a whole year; and when their meat was gone, they ate horses and dogs and cats and rats, rather than give in to the English.

At last there was nothing left to eat. The people

had become lean and pale and sickly; and they sent word to King Edward that they would give up the city if he would spare their lives and let them go free. But the king was angry and would not hear of it.

"If the men of Calais," he said, "will send me six of the chief citizens, having their heads and feet bare and with ropes around their necks and the keys of their city in their hands, I will work my will on these six, but I will spare all the rest."

Then the great church bell was rung to call the people of Calais together. When they heard what the king had said, they wept and wrung their hands, but no one spoke a word. At last one of the chief men, who was the richest in town, stood up and said, "Friends! what a pity it is to let so many die when six of us can save them. For myself, I have hope in God that if I give up my life for the people, I shall have pardon for my sins. So I will be the first one of the six to go out with my head and feet bare and a rope around my neck, and give myself up to the English king."

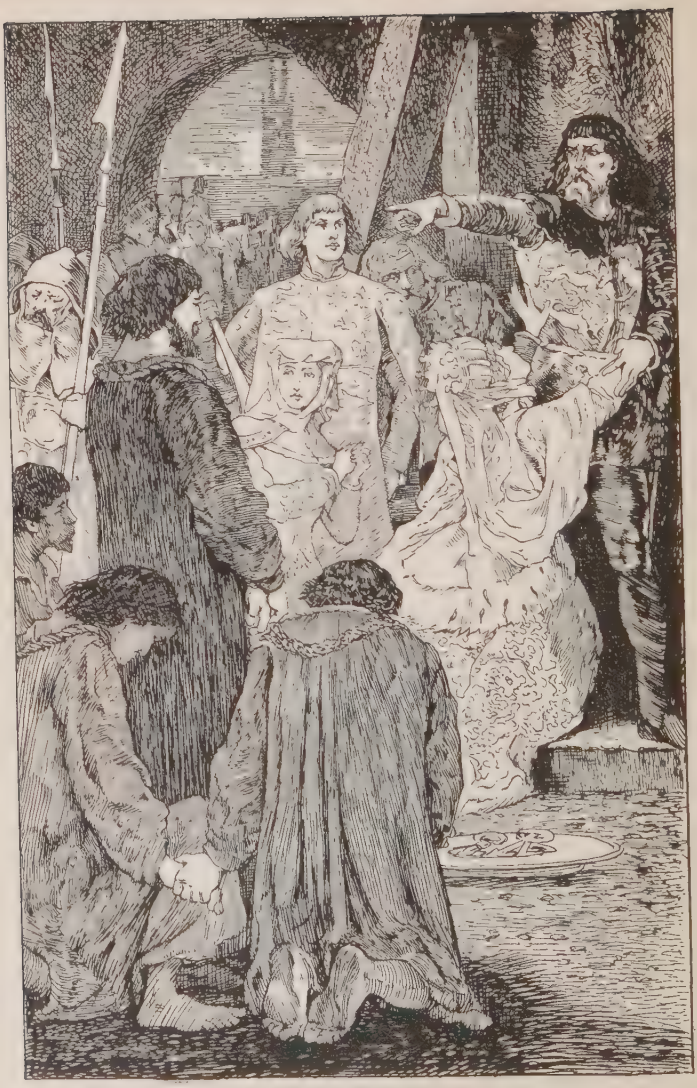
This noble speech fired the hearts of all who heard it. Then another citizen stood up and said that he would give his life; and so did a third and a fourth and a fifth and a sixth. As the six pale, thin, hollow-eyed citizens passed out of the city gates, with ropes round their necks and the keys of their town in their hands, there was not a dry eye in all the crowd that came to see them and bless them as they went.

When they came where the king was, they fell on their knees and said, "Gentle king, we are six of the chief citizens of Calais, who come to put ourselves at your mercy to save the rest of our people; have pity on us if it is your good will." It is said that even the English knights and soldiers shed tears at this pitiful sight.

King Edward alone remained stern, severe, and unmoved by the sight of so much heroism. And although those around him begged him to show mercy, he gave orders for the six brave men of Calais to be hanged at once. "Away with them," he said; "the men of Calais have killed so many of my people that I will have the lives of these six."

This cruel deed was about to be done when fortunately the king's wife, the good Queen Philippa, was moved by this sorrowful news. She had quite lately come over from England to join her husband; and while all this was going on she was in her tent close by. When she was told how hard and cruel the king was in his purpose, she threw herself in tears at his feet and prayed him for her sake to be merciful, and let the poor men go free.

"My gentle lord," she said, "I have crossed the sea at great peril to see you, and I have not yet asked a favor from you. I pray you, now, for Heaven's sake and for love of me, your wife, that you will have mercy on these six men."



QUEEN PHILIPPA ENTREATS THE KING TO SPARE THE LIVES OF THE SIX HEROIC CITIZENS OF CALAIS.

The king knit his brows and was silent awhile; then he said, "Lady, I wish you had been elsewhere! You beg in such a way that I cannot deny you. Take these six men; I give them to you. Do with them as you will!"

The good queen took the six men and gave them new clothes to put on, and feasted them and sent them away with rich presents, to the great rejoicing of the whole camp.

Calais was given up to the English king, and it became an English town for more than two hundred years.

It has been said that cannon were used for the first time in battle at Crecy, but this is uncertain. In the siege of Calais, however, cannon were used, but they were too poorly made and loaded with too little gunpowder to do much damage.

19. HOW WAT TYLER LED A REVOLT OF THE COMMON PEOPLE.

In the Year 1381.

RICHARD the Second was the son of the brave and noble Black Prince; but he was a very weak king. He came to the throne when he was quite a little boy, on the death of his grandfather Edward the Third. The whole English nation was ready to admire the young king for the sake of his father.

As to the lords and ladies about the court, they declared him to be the most beautiful, the wisest, and the best, even of princes.

Now I must tell you that in those days the poor were badly treated by the rich. Some of the poorest people were slaves. They were made to work on the same farm all their lives, and could be sold by their masters like cows or horses. Even those poor people who were free and lived in towns had to work hard for low wages. They were kept down by the rich and made to pay heavy taxes, when they could earn barely money enough to keep themselves alive.

One day an officer was going from house to house to gather the taxes in a little town in Kent, when he stopped at the cottage of a tiler named Wat. The poor man was at his work close by, laying tiles on the roof of a house, and only his wife and daughter were

at home. Wat the tiler, or Wat Tyler, as we call him now, saw the man go into his cottage, and soon after heard a loud scream. In an instant he jumped down from the roof, ran into his house, and, seeing the officer rude to his daughter, struck him on the head with his hammer and killed him.

So when Wat Tyler killed the brutal officer, all the poor people in the villages round about took his part. They agreed to go to London to lay their complaints before the king and, if need be, to fight for what they thought to be their rights. Before many days had passed, thousands of poor, rough, wild-looking men, some with bows, some with rusty old swords, and many with scythes fastened to the end of poles, were on the march to London. Wat Tyler rode at their head.

When the rebels arrived in London they marched up and down the streets, burning the houses of the rich, breaking open the doors of the prisons, and striking off the head of every man they met who would not say he was "for King Richard and the common people." The gold and silver plate that they found in rich men's houses they ruined with their hammers, but they took none of it away. They were so angry with one man who stole a silver cup and hid it in his clothes, that they flung him into the river, cup and all.

The young king, who was only sixteen, rode up to them and called out, "What is it you want, my men?"

"We want you to make us free," they said.

The king said he would give them freedom, and told them to go back to their homes. But Wat Tyler, with many thousands of rebels, stayed in London.

Next day King Richard met them again, and Tyler rode up to have a talk with the king. While he was speaking in his rough way, he laid his hand on the king's bridle. Upon this, the lord Mayor of London, thinking the king in danger, plunged his dagger into Tyler's neck.

Wat fell bleeding from his horse, and one of the king's servants thrust his sword into him and put an end to his life. In an instant the rebels bent their bows and shouted, "Kill! kill!" But the young king saved himself by his coolness. Riding up to the mob, he said to them, "What are you doing, my good men? Tyler was a traitor. I will be your leader; follow me!"

And they followed him to where his soldiers were lying in wait; and when the rebels saw the trap they had fallen into, they craved the king's pardon and laid down their arms and went quietly back to their homes.

It would be very much pleasanter if we could say that the young king kept his promise; but he did not. Perhaps he was not able, for he was only a boy and the government was not in his own hands. There was a good deal of blood shed, and many hundreds of rebels were put to death before the rebellion was crushed.

The young king's presence of mind on this occasion gave the people great hopes that he would become a wise and a good king, but these hopes were not fulfilled. Richard was too fond of ease and pomp, as well as dress, to make a king fit to rule the English, who were always ready for war. What he said one day he was apt to change the next, and so lost the love of his people.

King Richard was put to a cruel death in 1399, and his cousin Henry came to the throne by the title of Henry the Fourth.

The spirit of freedom which was aroused at this time in the minds of the people never died out. Each succeeding year it grew stronger. Wat Tyler's revolt was really the beginning of the long struggle on the part of the English people to be free, both in mind and in body.

20. PRINCE HAL AND THE GREAT VICTORY OF AGINCOURT.

In the Year 1415.

PRINCE HAL was the nickname given to the eldest son of King Henry the Fourth. When his father died and he came to the throne, he was called Henry the Fifth.

Now I must tell you that this young prince was sometimes wild. His love of fun often carried him too far; and he became a source of great grief to his father.

Henry the Fourth had robbed his cousin Richard the Second of his throne, — some said of his life, too, — and plots were often formed against Henry by his enemies.

One day one of Prince Hal's idle companions was brought before the chief-justice of England for the crime of robbery, was condemned, and sent to prison.

When the prince was told of this, he hurried to the court where the judge was still sitting, and rudely demanded that his friend should be set free at once. The judge spoke very quietly and told the prince to remember that no man, not even the king himself, was free to break the laws of the land.

At this the prince, more angry than before, cried out, "If you will not hear my words, you shall feel my

blows!" and, drawing his sword, was about to rush at the chief-justice. The judge was not in the least afraid, but said firmly, "Withdraw, sir, from this court!" This only made the prince more furious than ever; and he rushed forward and struck the chief-justice as he sat upon the bench.

The prince was at once seized. The judge still kept his temper, and said in a firm, clear voice: "Prince, I sit here in the place of our sovereign lord, your king and father. As his son and subject, you are doubly bound to obey him; and in his name I order you to be taken to prison, there to remain until the king's will be known!"

The prince, with a brave man's respect for courage in others, at once changed his mood, gave up his sword, bowed low to the judge, and went off to prison without speaking one word.

When the king was told of what had occurred, he exclaimed: "God, I thank thee for giving me a judge who has the courage to put the laws in force, and a son who knows how to obey them!"

When the prince afterwards became king, instead of showing anger against this good and brave judge, as a mean man would have done, he treated him with the greatest respect.

However badly Prince Hal behaved before he was king, it is certain that he changed his wild ways after he came to the throne. Among the very first things

he did after he became king was to prepare for renewing the war with France, as there had been none for some years. So Henry led an army over into that country.

It was not a very large army at first, and there was soon so much illness among the men that in a very short time only about one-half of it was left. But the king had made up his mind not to give in. He marched on until he met the great French host, and then he got ready for battle. The king saw to everything himself and kept up the hearts of his men by his own cheerfulness.

When some one said what a pity it was that they had not with them some of the brave men who were left at home in England, King Henry declared that he did not wish to have one more. "If God gives us victory," he said, "the fewer we are the more honor there will be to share among us. If not, the fewer we are the smaller the loss will be to England." The English soldiers, being now all in good heart, were refreshed with bread and wine, and heard prayers and waited quietly for the French.

The English archers at the outset drove back the French horse, blinding them with their arrows and confusing them so that they rolled over one another and trampled on their riders. Then eighteen French knights came up who had sworn to kill the English king; but he and those around him fought so bravely that not one

of those eighteen got away alive. Everybody could see where Henry was because he wore a gold crown over his helmet. A piece of the crown was struck off once while he was guarding the royal flag, but he himself was not hurt.

The English, seeing their king always in the thick of the battle, fought like lions. The French fought bravely, too, but it was of no use. Before night had come, all those who were not killed or made prisoners had run away, and left the English flag floating in truimph over the field of the battle of Agincourt.

The English people welcomed their brave king home with shouts of rejoicing, and plunged into the water to bear him ashore on their shoulders. They flocked in crowds to welcome him in every town through which he passed. They hung out of their windows rich carpets and tapestries, and strewed the streets with flowers.

21. BRAVE KNIGHTS AND HOW THEY FOUGHT IN OLDEN TIMES.

WE have been told a great deal about the bold and gallant deeds of the old-time warriors. Let us now read of the trials and hard service these men went through to fit themselves the better for the tests of daily life and the battlefield.

The title of knight was the highest that could be given to a soldier, and was given only to those who had proved themselves to be very brave on the field of battle.

A knight wore a pair of costly spurs and a rich belt to distinguish him from other men. He was treated with great respect by others. No one could look down upon him, not even the king, who was generally a knight himself. Even if a man should spring from the lowest rank and become a knight, he was then considered a gentleman and free to associate with the highest in the land.

It will be easily understood that nearly every gentleman's son in the country would wish to be a knight; but to become one he had to go through a very long training.

The sons of nobles first became pages in the household of some knight. They were then taught how to

handle a sword. This was done by sketching on the trunk of a tree the image of a man, marked in places to correspond with the parts of the human body. The page had to thrust at this with his sword until he could hit any part he wished.

He was then taught how to manage a horse, and to use a lance while on horseback. He then had to ride at a pole set upright in the earth with a shield fastened to it with thongs of leather, and try to lift the shield and carry it away with his lance.

Another step in his training was to ride on horseback and strike with his lance the breast of a wooden Saracen. If he failed to hit the figure fairly in the center, it turned on a spindle and struck him on the back with a wooden sword.

When the page was strong enough and could use his weapons well, he became a kind of a body servant called a squire. He then had to follow his master into battle and to put into practice what he had learned as a page. After serving some years as a squire, if he had proved himself brave in war he was considered fit to be made a knight.

Perhaps you would like to know just how a knight was made. Let me tell you. In the first place, there was a great deal of ceremony. The squire had to spend several nights in church, watching and praying; and he also had to watch his armor hanging over the altar for at least one night. The next morning,

after a service in church, he was brought to the king or to some great noble, who then struck him on the back with the flat of a sword, and at the same time said with a loud voice, "In the name of God, St. Michael,

A CONTEST BETWEEN KNIGHTS IN THE OLDEN TIMES.

and St. George, I name thee knight; be brave, hardy, and loyal." The spurs of the new knight were then buckled on him by the ladies who were present.

Sometimes, however, a knight was made at once on

the field of battle for some very brave deed, and this was considered a great honor.

On great festivals it was a common practice for knights to have battles with each other, to see which of them was the best horseman or the most skillful in the use of the lance. The contests were called tournaments, and were carried out in the following way.

A great space in an open meadow was fenced in with wooden barriers. The space was called the lists, and the barriers were made of such a height that persons could see over them. Crowds of people stood outside the barriers to see the battle. In one part of the lists a great wooden stand was made, in which sát the king and his nobles with their wives and daughters.

All knights who wished to test their valor hung up their shields inside the lists. A knight, having decided in his own mind with whom he would like to contend, touched the shield with his lance. The owner of the shield then had to come out and fight.

The two knights, mounted on horses and covered with armor, then went to opposite sides of the lists and waited for a signal. When this was given they put spurs to their horses and rushed at each other with their lances.

The object of each was to strike the other with his lance in such a way as to throw him from his saddle. The one who fell was declared beaten and had to leave the lists. If the two knights were equal in

strength, perhaps neither fell from his horse, although their lances might be broken into pieces. In battles of this kind the sharp points of the lances were taken off, so that the knights should not kill each other.

The knight who on the first day of the tournament was thought to have done the best, had the privilege of selecting among the ladies present the one whom he thought the most beautiful, and she was then elected "Queen of Love." She sat in a high place, and when the tournament was ended she gave the prizes to the victorious knights. The last day of the tournament was generally given up to a battle between a number of knights.

Sometimes, however, in tournaments, the knights fought with sharp lances. If a knight happened to be thrown from his horse and not killed, then the knights drew their swords and fought till one of them was killed, or the king gave the signal to stop.

Knights often fought in this way when they had quarreled with one another. Again, if one knight was accused by another of wrongdoing, then the one accused might challenge the other to fight. If he won, he was considered innocent; but if beaten, he was judged to be guilty. This was called trial by battle.

22. QUEEN MARGARET AND THE ROBBER.

War of the Roses, from 1455 to 1485.

ONE day when roses were in bloom, two noblemen came to angry words in the Temple Garden, by the side of the river Thames. In the midst of their quarrel one of them plucked a white rose from a bush, and, turning to those who were near him, said: "He who will stand by me in this quarrel, let him pluck a white rose with me and wear it in his hat."

Then the other nobleman tore a red rose from another bush, and said: "Let him who will stand by me pluck a red rose and wear it as his badge." Now this quarrel was a very sad thing indeed, for it led to a great civil war, that is, a war in which people of the same nation fight one against the other.

It was called the "War of the Roses," for every soldier wore a white or red rose on his helmet, to show on which side he fought.

The king Henry the Sixth, and his wife, Queen Margaret, sided with the "Red Roses," and it was a sad sight to see the king and all the great nobles trying to kill each other.

You will read some day of all the great battles that were fought and all the wicked deeds that were done during those dreadful times. Let me tell you now one

story of the war to show you what a cruel thing war is.

In a battle at a place called Hexham, the king's party was beaten, and Queen Margaret with her little son had to flee for her life. She had not gone far from the battlefield when she was met by a band of savage robbers. They stopped her and took all her rich jewels from her fingers, and, holding a drawn sword over her head, swore they would kill her if she dared to stir.

The poor queen fell on her knees and cried, and begged them to have pity on her and spare the young prince, her only son. Now while the queen was on her knees, the robbers began to quarrel among themselves as to how they would share their plunder; and drawing their swords, they fought one against another. When the queen saw what was going on, she leaped to her feet, and, taking the young prince by the hand, made off with him as fast as she could.

There was a thick wood close at hand, and Queen Margaret plunged into it. But she was sorely afraid all the while, and trembled from head to foot; for she knew this wood was a hiding-place for all robbers and outlaws in that wild and lonely region. Every tree she saw she fancied was a man with a drawn sword in his hand, making ready to kill her.

But she went on and on through the dark forest, this way and that, not knowing where was she going, till she saw by the light of the rising moon a tall, fierce man

step out from behind a tree, and come walking up to her. She knew by his dress that he was a robber; but thinking he might have children of his own, she made

QUEEN MARGARET SEEKS PROTECTION FOR HERSELF AND THE PRINCE FROM THE ROBBER.

up her mind to throw herself upon his mercy. When he came near she spoke to him.

"Friend," she said, "for Heaven's sake, have pity upon me. I am the queen. Kill me if thou wilt, but spare my son. He is the son of the king. Take him, I will

trust him to thee. Keep him safe from those who seek his life, and God will have pity on thee for all thy sins."

The tears of the queen moved the heart of the fierce robber. He took up the prince in his arms, and, bidding the queen follow him, led them to a cave in the rocks, where he gave them food to eat and kept them safe for two days, when their friends came up and took care of them. If ever you go to Hexham Forest, you may see this robber's cave. It is on the bank of a little stream that flows at the foot of a hill, and to this day the people call it "Queen Margaret's Cave."

But all the queen's efforts could not save her son. After many changes of fortune, he was taken prisoner.

"How dared you," said King Edward, when the unhappy prince was brought to his tent, "how dared you take up arms against your king?"

"I fought for my father," the brave prince replied, "whose crown I shall one day wear."

"That day shall never come," cried King Edward; and, as if in answer to his angry glance, his attendants fell upon the prince, and Queen Margaret was left childless.

23. THE PRINCES IN THE TOWER.

In the Year 1483.

THE Tower of London, a square, gloomy castle on the banks of the river Thames, has heard the sighs and moans of many a weary prisoner, has seen many princes and great men led forth to die, and has beheld many a dark deed of blood. But it never saw a deed more dark and cruel than the murder of two little innocent boys, whose only crime was that they were the heirs to the English throne.

These two boys were the sons of King Edward the Fourth, and they had been left to the care of their uncle, Richard, duke of Gloucester. Richard was a pale, haggard man, with dark, flashing, keen eyes, a sharp, thin face, and bent shoulders. He was known by the nickname of Richard Crookback.

Now Richard was as cunning as he was wicked, and by and by he made the people believe that the older of the young princes was not fit to be king, and got them to make him king in his place. After he was made king he was more cruel than ever. He never went to see the princes, nor let them stir out of the Tower; but shut them up in the little room, and had a cruel man called Black Will to wait on them and see that they did not run away.

The poor little princes were very unhappy, shut up in this lonely chamber; and instead of laughing and playing like other boys, they used to sit still and cry. One day the young king — for he was a king, you know, though he never wore a crown — sighed and said to his brother, "I would not care if my uncle took my crown, if he would only give me my life."

But Richard wanted to get rid of the princes, for his crown was not safe as long as they lived. Yet he knew the governor of the Tower was a good man, and would not hurt the princes for any one. So one night he sent a bad man named Sir James Tyrrel to the Tower, with orders to the governor to give up the keys to him.

Two fierce, rough men went with him. One was Tyrrel's own groom, a big burly fellow; the other was a villain who had made murder his trade.

As soon as Tyrrel had got the keys of the Tower and had sent the governor away, he told the two men to go to the little room where the princes slept, while he waited outside and kept watch.

Slowly and softly they stole up the stone stairs — a dark lantern in their hands — and came into the room where the princes lay asleep. They were in the same bed. Their little arms were round each other's necks, and their soft, sweet faces were touching each other.

For a moment the heart of one of the villains was moved, and he said he could not kill them, they looked so sweet and innocent. But the other man put him in

THE PRINCES IN THE TOWER.

From a photograph of a painting by Millais.

mind of all the money they were to have, and then they took the bed clothes and covered the faces of the children, and pressed the pillows on the top and kept them down tight till the poor little princes were quite dead.

When all was over the men brought Tyrrel up to see the bodies, so that he might be able to tell the king that the deed had been done. By the light of the lantern, they dug a deep hole at the foot of the stairs, and put the bodies of the princes into it. Then they covered them over with rubbish, put down the stones again, and went their way.

Two hundred years after this cruel deed, some workmen, digging under the stone stairs in the Tower, found the bones of the two little princes. Charles the Second, who was then the king, had them taken up and put in a casket; and buried them in Westminster Abbey.

24. THE FIRST ENGLISH PRINTER.

William Caxton, born 1412; died 1491.

AFTER all the stories we have read of war and battle, of blood and murder, of hatred and quarrel, it will be pleasant for us to read of something that is good and peaceable — of something that is useful to our fellow-men. Such is the story of how the printing press came to be set up in England.

Before the year 1477, books were so dear that even kings and wealthy nobles could have only a very few books in their homes. There is a story told of Louis the Eleventh of France, that when he once wished to borrow a book from a rich man, he and one of his nobles had to sign a paper, in which they both solemnly and faithfully promised to let the owner have his book back again; and besides this, he had to give the owner a large quantity of costly silver plate to keep until the book was returned.

Before the art of printing was invented all books were written by hand — slowly and with much labor. They were often full of costly little pictures, also made by hand, richly bound in velvet, and fastened with gold or silver clasps, in which precious stones were sometimes set. It was at that time of no use for a poor man to learn to read, for he had no chance of ever getting any books.

Now let me tell you that printing was invented in Germany, and the art was brought to England by William Caxton, a London merchant, who was born in 1412, a short time before the reign of Henry the Fifth, the soldier king. He lived all through the troubled times of the War of the Roses, and during the reign of six English kings.

William Caxton went abroad and lived for some time in Bruges, a famous old town in Flanders. He was for some time in the service of the duchess of Burgundy, a lady who was the sister of the English king, Edward the Fourth. There was at that time in Bruges a famous man who had learned the art of printing from the Germans; and it was from him that Caxton acquired this new and wonderful art of making books.

The first book that Caxton printed was called the "Tales of Troy." When he had brought out this book, he returned to England, after an absence of nearly thirty-five years.

Caxton set up his printing press at Westminster, within the limits of the Abbey, "at the sign of the Red Pole." He advertised his wares as "good chepe," that is, very cheap.

Caxton was at this time an old man probably over sixty years of age; but for fifteen years he worked with intense energy, not only in printing books, but in translating others into English before he printed them. This new art seemed so wonderful at first to the people that

they thought the workmen who were engaged in it must have been helped by the Evil One.

The first book printed in England was the "Game and Play of the Chess," printed in 1477. Caxton, having once begun, was never idle. He printed the poems of Chaucer, "the Morning Star of English poetry," and book after book on various subjects was sent out from his press.

Sixty-four books in all went out from the sign of the Red Pole — all of them printed with the odd, old types now known as Black Letter. Caxton was much encouraged in his efforts by many English noblemen, and Edward the Fourth, Richard the Third, and Henry the Seventh all took an interest in his work.

One of Caxton's greatest difficulties was the changes that were then taking place in the English language. Thus he says, "Our language now used varieth far from that which was used and spoken when I was born."

Once, when discouraged at the length of a piece of work he had undertaken, a rich nobleman persuaded him to go on, and promised him a fee of a stag in summer and a deer in winter. Amidst general encouragement and interest, the old man worked on and was full of plans when death took him away, leaving behind him a name which will always be famous while the English language exists.

25. THE STORY OF THE "INVINCIBLE ARMADA."

The "Armada" was defeated in the Year 1588.

QUEEN MARY, the eldest daughter of Henry the Eighth, was the first woman to rule over England. Her marriage in 1554 to Philip, the heir of the vast Spanish empire, had excited great alarm and indignation throughout England. For you must know that at this time a most bitter feeling existed between the Spanish and the English people.

When Philip came to England to meet his bride, his proud and haughty ways made him hated still more. Fortunately for England, Queen Mary died after a brief reign of a little over five years. Her sister Elizabeth, the good Queen Bess, succeeded to the throne.

Great was the joy in England when she began to reign. The bells in all the churches were set ringing, tables were spread in the streets, "where was plentiful eating, drinking, and making merry." At night bonfires were lighted in the streets, and every one seemed glad that the stern and gloomy Mary was gone. All felt that there would be a change for the better in the condition of the country.

Queen Elizabeth showed great wisdom in her choice of persons to aid her with their counsel. Much of the success of her glorious reign is due to the wisdom of

her able advisers. Now this same Philip of Spain who had married Queen Mary and had tried to become king of England, was the richest and most powerful ruler in the world. Thirty years after his wife's death, and when Elizabeth was reigning in England, he resolved to build the largest fleet of the largest ships the world had ever seen, and with it to subdue England and make it a part of his vast empire. He fitted out a fleet of one hundred and thirty large ships, manned by eight thousand sailors and galley slaves, and carrying twenty thousand troops.

The "Invincible Armada," as Philip called it, that is to say, the fleet that could never be beaten, left Lisbon on the 29th of May, 1588. It was directed to sail to Calais, to be joined there by troops from the Netherlands.

England was not idle in making ready to resist the Spaniards. All the men between sixteen and sixty were trained and drilled. The royal navy at this time consisted of only thirty-six sail; but the towns of England and many private gentlemen eagerly fitted out vessels at their own expense, and bought great numbers of cannon and large quantities of gunpowder.

Very soon a fleet of one hundred and ninety-one ships, small, but swift and active, and filled with daring sailors, was afloat upon the waters of the English Channel. Most of them were little larger than a yacht, while the Spanish vessels were like huge floating castles.

But the English ships could sail twice as fast as the Spanish and fire three shots to the Spaniards' one.

So with all England roused like one strong, angry man, with both sides of the Thames fortified, and with the soldiers under arms and the sailors in their ships, the country waited for the coming of the proud Spanish fleet. The queen herself, riding on a white horse, with armor on her back, and the Earl of Essex and the Earl of Leicester holding her bridle rein, made a stirring speech to the troops at Tilbury, opposite Gravesend. She was received with much enthusiasm.

"I come among you," said the queen, "to live or die with you, to lay down my crown even in the dust, for my God and my people. I know I have but the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart of a king, and of a king of England."

She ordered bonfires to be made on every hilltop and kindled when the "Armada" came in sight, so as to flash the news over the whole country.

The evening shadows of the summer sun on the 19th of July, 1588, were slowly lengthening over the bowling green of the Pelican Inn in Plymouth, where a noisy party of jolly sea captains might have been seen at play. There were Lord Howard, — the Lord High Admiral of England, — Drake, Hawkins, and other great sailors.

In the midst of their game there burst in an old sailor, shouting:

"My lord! my lord! the Spaniards are coming; I saw them off the Lizard last night! They're coming full sail — hundreds of them darkening the water!"

"Then we must go at once," said Lord Howard, throwing down his bowl.

"Not a bit of it, my lord!" replied Drake, who was vice-admiral of the fleet, "there's plenty of time to finish the game and thrash the Spaniards too!"

Slowly, but proudly, came the great "Armada" up the Channel, the tall sea-castles sailing in a crescent which measured seven miles from tip to tip. Drake's plan was not to meet them, but to hang about their rear and pick off their ships one by one. "The following game is our game," he gleefully whispered to Hawkins, "not the meeting one. The dog goes after the sheep and not before them, my lad. Let them go by, and we'll

QUEEN ELIZABETH REVIEWING HER TROOPS AT TILBURY.

stick to them and pick up the stragglers." And the weather-beaten old sea-dog chuckled heartily to himself.

For a whole week the Spanish ships sailed up the Channel, and at last cast anchor off Calais. The English admiral, wishing to scatter them, took six of the oldest vessels in his fleet, filled them with pitch, old ropes, tar barrels, sulphur, resin, and other things that would make a good blaze, set fire to them, and in the dead of night sent them down before the wind right into the heart of the Spanish fleet.

A panic seized the Spanish sailors. Some weighed anchor; some cut their cables, hoisted any sail that came to hand, ran up against their neighbors and had their rigging entangled; while others got away as best they could.

The next day three or four English ships closed round the great unwieldy, floating castles, and fired into them until they sank beneath the waves. Those that could get free were glad to sail away to the north, for the wind was blowing right up the Channel, and it was impossible for them to return home that way.

A terrible storm now made sad havoc with the Spanish fleet. Scores of vessels were wrecked on the coast of France, the Low Countries, Scotland, and Ireland, and the dead bodies of the poor sailors strewed many a shore. Of all this large fleet only fifty-three shattered vessels returned to Spain to tell their tale of disaster and defeat.

Such was the fate of the "Invincible Armada." Thus ended this great attempt to invade and conquer England. The sun of Spanish greatness had set; her rule over the seas was broken.

When the news of the defeat of the "Armada" spread throughout Europe, all men felt a great respect for the brave English people and their heroic queen. The English themselves were more proud than ever of their good Queen Bess, who had trusted them and had spoken out so bravely in the hour of danger.

England was now safe from foreign invasion; and English ships sailed over every sea, increasing the commerce of the realm, and making the English name known and feared as it had never been known and feared before.

26. TWO FAMOUS MEN WHO LIVED IN THE DAYS OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.

Queen Elizabeth reigned from 1558 to 1603.

IN the days of the good Queen Elizabeth there were many brave and many wise men, whom you will read about when you are older. One of the bravest, wisest, and best of them all was Sir Philip Sidney. He was a daring soldier, as well as a scholar and a poet. He was born in a pretty old manor house in Kent. If you should ever go there, you would see "Sir Philip Sidney's oak," which he planted with his own hand.

Young Sidney was very wise, very polished in his manners, and very generous. Even as a child he was grave and thoughtful; and while his teachers found him a quick scholar, they were able to learn something from him. When he grew up to be a young man he chose as his friends, not young men like himself, but men who were old enough to have been his father. These men — some of them great statesmen — thought Sidney wise beyond his years, and often took his advice on very weighty matters.

Sir Philip was tall and fair and handsome, and had such sweet and winning ways that no one could help loving him. Queen Elizabeth was very fond of him. She called him her Philip, and would scarcely ever let

him out of her sight. People in far-off lands had heard how good and wise Sir Philip was. The men of Poland at one time asked him to be their king; but the queen

SIDNEY AND THE WOUNDED SOLDIER.

said she could not spare him, for he was "the fairest jewel in her crown."

But when war broke out in Holland, Sir Philip was sent over to fight against the enemies of England. In his last battle — near the town of Zutphen — he had two horses shot under him. Then he mounted a third

horse, and led on his men to the charge. But before the battle was over, a bullet struck him and broke his thigh. Then two of his own soldiers carried Sir Philip on a litter slowly to the rear.

It was plain to see that the brave young soldier was dying. His face was deadly pale, his leg was bleeding fast, and he was dizzy and faint from loss of blood. His tongue was so parched with thirst that he begged for a drink of water. A bowl of water was brought to him. He lifted it to his mouth and was just going to drink, when a poor soldier, who was also badly hurt, was carried past. The soldier saw the water, and looked at it with longing eyes.

At that very instant Sir Philip took the water from his own lips without even tasting it, and gave it to the common soldier to drink; saying, as he did so, "Poor fellow, he needs it more than I do." When Sir Philip died, as he did soon after, all England mourned for him; and his body was brought across the sea and buried in St. Paul's.

This touching action of a noble heart is perhaps as well known as any incident in history. It is as famous far and wide as the tale of the blood-stained Tower of London with its axe and block and cruel murders. So delightful is an act of true humanity, and so glad is mankind to remember it.

Now let me tell you of another famous man who lived in the days of Queen Elizabeth. One day, as the queen was walking down to the river to go on board the royal barge, a crowd stood waiting to see her pass. Among them was a gay, handsome young man, who wore a bright velvet cloak. He had pushed his way to the front and was gazing at the queen when he saw her stop before a little pool of muddy water, for she was afraid to wet her feet.

In an instant he stepped out from the crowd, took off his cloak, and spread it on the muddy ground; and the queen, blushing and smiling, walked over it and passed on. It was an affair of a moment, and the crowd scattered as quickly as it had gathered. Walter Raleigh, for this was the young man's name, still stood near the riverside with the cloak on his arm, when a messenger from the queen called him to the royal barge.

Good Queen Bess, as she is often called, was seated beneath an awning in the center of a group of lords and ladies.

"What is your name?" she asked.

"May it please your Majesty," the young man answered, "my name is Raleigh, and my father is of an old but unfortunate family."

"You have to-day," the queen said, "spoilt a good cloak in our service. Take this jewel," she added, handing him a ring in which a diamond shone, "and wear it henceforth in memory of this day."

RALEIGH SPREADS HIS CLOAK FOR THE QUEEN TO WALK UPON

Raleigh was not only gay and handsome, but he was brave and clever as well. He could do almost anything. He was a soldier, sailor, poet, — all in one. He beat the Spaniards in many a brave fight, both on land and on sea; and he made poems and wrote books that you may read when you are older. But he loved above all things to sail to far-off countries and find out new and strange lands.

Once when he sailed to America he brought back some potatoes and also tobacco. It was the first time they had ever been seen in England. Sir Walter planted his potatoes on his own land in Ireland; and they grew so well there that the people of that country have ever since used potatoes as their chief food.

He used to smoke his tobacco in a silver pipe. One day he was having a quiet smoke, when a servant came into his room with a pitcher of water. The servant had never seen a man smoking before; and when he saw the smoke coming out of his master's mouth, he threw the full pitcher of water into Sir Walter's face, and ran away as fast as he could, crying out that his master was on fire!

After the death of Queen Elizabeth, King James the First sent Raleigh to the Tower on a charge of treason. Thirteen years slowly passed before the chance of freedom came. James was fond of money. Raleigh had never lost his love of liberty. If the king would give

him freedom and fit out a fleet, he said he would return with gold from the shores of South America.

The expedition was a failure. The English were beaten by the Spaniards, and Sir Walter's favorite son was killed. "My brains," he wrote, "are broken." He might have added that his heart was also broken.

His friends urged him never to come home again. Two noblemen, however, had offered their lives as surety for him when he left England, and he would not buy his life at the price of theirs, was the answer he sent back. So he came back to London and to the Tower, and ended his days on the scaffold.

It would make our little book too long if I tried to tell you of all the wise and good things done by Queen Elizabeth, or if I told you the names of half the famous men who lived in her time. Of all the celebrated men of this glorious reign, none are to be compared to Shakespeare, whose plays are so widely read and quoted, nor even to Spenser, who lived and died in the time of this great queen.

27. DEATH OF CHARLES THE FIRST.

King Charles the First was executed in the Year 1649.

THERE was once a king of England called Charles the First, who wanted to have his own way — right or wrong — in all things. He thought that because he was king he could break the laws when he liked and rule the land as he pleased.

It was a great pity. For Charles was a good man in some ways; and if he had been just and kind to his people, they would have loved him. But he made them pay taxes that were quite unjust, and tried to do away with the Parliament and rule the land himself. This was wrong. It was going against the rights of the people and against the laws of the land. So Parliament tried to stop him.

But it was no use, the king would have his way; and at last a great civil war broke out between the king and the Parliament. For the most part, the nobles and the clergymen were on the king's side. The friends of the king were called Cavaliers. They wore their hair long and had fine, gay clothes, and were merry, laughing, and jolly when things went well with them.

The friends of the Parliament wore short hair, and were therefore called Roundheads. They were mostly grave, earnest men, and very sober in their dress.

The war lasted for three years. Then Oliver Cromwell — a stern, rough man, but the best general on the Parliament side — defeated the king and broke up his army in a great battle at Naseby.

From that day the poor king was an outcast, and was hunted from place to place by Cromwell's soldiers. Many a day he had not a morsel to eat; and many a night, hungry and footsore, he lay down to sleep in the lonely woods. At last he gave himself up.

But Parliament could not agree what to do with him. Most of the members pitied him and wanted to make friends with him. But the chief men of the army, who had now all the power, had made up their minds that the king should die.

So Cromwell gave orders for Charles to be brought to trial for having made war against his people.

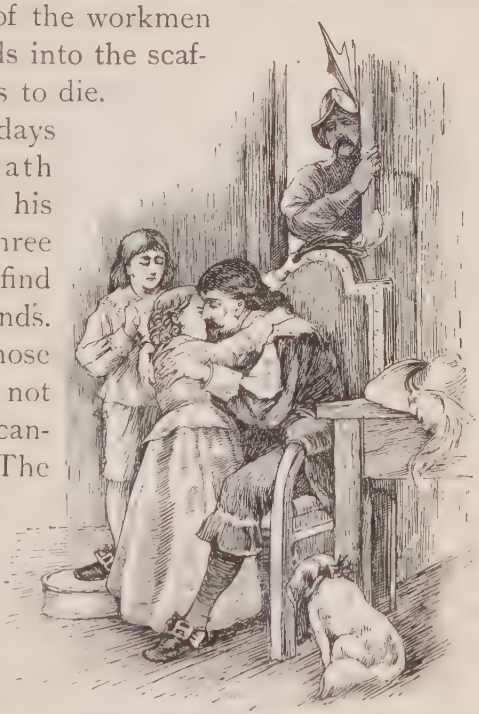
But neither the lords nor the judges of the land would try the king. Then Cromwell and his friends set themselves up as judges, and sent word to Charles to appear before them in Westminster Hall.

The king was led to trial by brutal soldiers, who mocked him and pointed their pistols at him as they walked by his side.

The people on the streets had pity on him, and many in the crowd cried out to him as he passed, "God save your Majesty," "God keep you from your enemies." But, alas, they could not help the unfortunate king in the day of his downfall and misery!

The trial lasted seven days. Then sentence of death was passed on the king, and the soldiers led him to Whitehall. That night, while he lay awake in bed, he heard the hammers of the workmen as they drove the nails into the scaffold on which he was to die.

He had only three days to prepare for death and to take leave of his children. In those three days he could not find time to see his friends. "I hope," he said, "those who love me will not take it ill that they cannot come to me. The best thing they can do now is to pray for me."



KING CHARLES TAKING LEAVE OF HIS CHILDREN.

On the next day two of the unhappy king's children came to see their father for the last time. They cried and cried till their eyes were so swollen that they could hardly see. The king did all he could to comfort them, and told them that he forgave his enemies and hoped that God, too, would forgive them. Bidding

good-bye to his little daughter Elizabeth, who was only twelve years of age, he said, "Sweetheart, you will forget this."

"No," she replied, "I will never forget it as long as I live!" The poor child died soon after her father.

Taking his little son Henry, a child of eight, on his knee, he said to him: "My boy, they will cut off thy father's head, and will, perhaps, make thee a king. But mark what I say: thou must not let them make thee king as long as thy brothers Charles and James live." The little fellow looked up through his tears and said, "No, father, I will be torn in pieces first."

When morning broke — the morning of the day on which the king had to die — snow lay on the ground and on all the housetops. The king, on seeing it, put on extra clothing. "If I shake with cold," he thought, "my enemies will say I tremble for fear." When food was placed before him he would not touch it.

But Bishop Juxon, who had been praying with him, said, "You have had a long fast; the weather is cold, and you may faint."

"You are right," replied the king; and he took a bit of bread and a glass of wine. "Now," said he, in a cheerful voice, "I am ready; let my enemies come!"

As the clock tolled one, the king was led through an open window on to the black scaffold, which faced the street. With a clear eye and a calm, proud look on his worn but handsome face, the king looked around him.

He saw nothing but soldiers and pikes and flashing swords. The people were afar off and out of all hearing.

Walking up to the headsman, he pointed to the block. "Place it," he said, "so that it may not shake."

"It is quite firm," said the man.

"I shall say a short prayer," said the king; "and when I thrust my hand out thus — strike!" The king said a prayer to himself, raised his eyes to heaven, and, kneeling down, laid his head on the block. A minute passed — Charles put out his hand — the axe fell — and the king was dead.

A groan of pain and horror rose from the vast crowd; and the soldiers, who had sat on their horses and stood in their ranks immovable as statues, were of a sudden all in motion, clearing the streets.

28. HOW KING CHARLES THE SECOND ESCAPED FROM HIS ENEMIES.

Charles the Second reigned from 1660 to 1685.

AFTER the death of Charles the First, his eldest son, afterwards Charles the Second, had to face many dangers before he came to the throne. Though the English Parliament was against him, Scotland was on his side; and he marched into England at the head of a Scottish army.

The great leader of the Parliamentary forces, Oliver Cromwell, met Charles near Worcester and beat his army "from hedge to hedge," until he had driven it into the town. The Scottish troops were completely routed, and Charles himself had to flee for his life. When the day was lost, King Charles put spurs to his horse and, with a few friends at his side, rode all night long.

Cromwell had sent word up and down the country, that he would give a thousand pounds to any man who would take the king or tell where he was; and would cut off the head of any one who dared to give him shelter. So the king and his friends rode softly along quiet lanes, keeping away from the farms and villages.

At the break of day they came to a farm where there lived a family of woodcutters by the name of Pendrell. The Earl of Derby, who was with the king, knew the

Pendrells well. There were five brothers of them. They had once saved the earl's life when Cromwell's soldiers were after him, and he knew them to be true to the king. They were very poor, but what of that? They were brave and faithful, and cared neither for Cromwell's threats nor for his gold. The earl went up to Pendrell and said to him: "Will, here is the king. I can trust him with you. Keep him safe!"

But Cromwell's men were close at hand, and it was not safe for the king to stay in the house. So Will Pendrell led him into a wood that was quite near and told him to hide there, and he and his brothers would keep watch. It rained from morn till night, and the king was wet to the skin. But the kind-hearted woodcutters brought him bread and cheese to eat and a thick blanket to sit on; and the king sat under a tree till it grew quite dark. But he wanted to cross the river Severn and get into Wales, thinking he would be safer there.

So Dick Pendrell got the king to put on an old worn suit of his and a pair of thick shoes, and stain his hands and face with walnut juice, to make him look like a woodman. When Charles was ready, Dick went with him to show him the way. But when they got to the banks of the Severn, they found that Cromwell's redcoats had taken away all the boats, and that soldiers were pacing up and down the river bank to stop the king or any of his party from crossing into Wales.

After hiding all day in a hayloft, the king with Dick Pendrell started back. They made their way in the dark across fields and over hedges and ditches. The king's heavy shoes were too big for him, and got full of sand and water. His feet were so sore that he could scarcely crawl along. But at last they came back to the Pendrell farm, and King Charles went and hid again in the woods.

When the king went back into the woods he found one of his own officers, hiding there, and went up and spoke to him. While they were talking, they heard the clank of swords and the tramp of horses' feet. The soldiers were coming into the woods. What were they to do? There was not a moment to lose. A big oak tree stood near them, and they climbed up into it and hid among the branches.

It was lucky for them that the leaves grew thick, for soon some of Cromwell's troops came riding by. They could hear them say as they looked up and down that they were sure the king was near, and it would be a bad job for him if they caught him. But they did not catch him. He stayed in the tree all day. The Pendrells gave him food and brought him a cushion to sit on. The king was very tired. He had had no sleep for two nights. So he laid his head in the lap of the officer and fell asleep.

King Charles stayed at the Pendrell farm for two or three days; but there were so many of his enemies

about that it was not safe for him to stay longer. So one of the Pendrells went to Colonel Lane, who lived some miles off, to see what could be done to get the king away.

Jane Lane, the colonel's daughter, was going to Bristol; so it was agreed that Charles should go with her and act as her groom, or manservant. The king put on a suit of gray like a serving man, mounted a strong horse, and took Jane Lane behind him on the pillion, as was the custom in those days. Then he set out for Bristol in the hope of finding a vessel there.

In the course of their journey, the lady stopped for the night at the house of a country gentleman; and the king, to keep up his character of a servant, had to remain in the kitchen. The cook bade him wind up the jack, on which the meat was roasting; but he was very clumsy about it.

"Where have you come from," cried the cook, "that you don't know how to wind up a jack?"

"Indeed, sir, I am but a poor farmer's son," replied the young prince, "and it is but seldom we see meat at home; and when we have it, we don't use a jack to roast it."

The king had many a narrow escape before he came to his journey's end. One day, when his horse had lost a shoe, he had to stop at a blacksmith's to have it put on.

The blacksmith said to him, "What news to-day? Have they caught that rogue, Charles Stuart, yet?"—meaning the king.

"No," said Charles, chuckling to himself, "they haven't caught him yet. But when they do catch him, I hope they 'll cut his head off."

"So do I," said the blacksmith.

Another time when he came to an inn, he found the stable-yard full of Cromwell's soldiers. If he had turned back, he would most likely have been found out. So he put on a bold face and rode his horse right in the midst of them. "Now then, you stupid fool!" cried the soldiers, "can't you see where you are going?" They little knew that the stupid groom was Charles Stuart, king of England!

At last the king escaped in a vessel and reached France in safety. He stayed abroad till Cromwell was dead, and until his people sent for him to come back home. As he rode into London on the 29th of May, his own birthday, there was great joy among the people. Most of them wore oak leaves in their caps to keep them in mind of the "royal oak" that saved King Charles from his enemies. Even yet the English people call—

"The twenty-ninth of May—
Royal Oak Day."

29. THE STORY OF THE GREAT PLAGUE IN LONDON.

In the Year 1665.

DURING the very hot summer of the year 1665, five years after Charles the Second came to the throne, a dreadful plague broke out in London. The plague had appeared in England several times before, and was known by the name of the "Black Death"; but it had never before been so fatal as now.

The very panic caused the plague to spread; for nothing makes people so ready to catch a disease as being afraid of it.

Another thing which was against the people of London was the unhealthful condition of the city. The houses were very old, and were built so close together that hardly any fresh air could get in between them. Worse still, they were very filthy.

As soon as the plague began, every one who could afford it hastened to leave the town. The roads leading to the country were crowded with coaches and foot-passengers, while carts and wagons were laden with their goods. Thousands of servants were left behind by their masters; and these poor creatures, sad and lonely, wandered about in the streets, not knowing where to go. In the general fear, children ran away from their parents and parents from their children.

Some who were taken ill died alone without any help. Some were stabbed or strangled by hired nurses, who robbed them of all their money and stole the very beds on which they lay. Some went mad, dropped from the windows, ran through the streets, and in their pain and frenzy flung themselves into the river. People died by thousands — sometimes as many as ten thousand in a week.

A LONDON STREET AT NIGHT DURING THE PLAGUE.

Grass grew in the streets; whole rows of shops were shut; and the only business in what were once the busiest streets of the city was the sad business of funerals. The dead were carried away in carts and emptied into one vast, common grave.

At night the dead cart rumbled through the streets; a bell was rung, and the cry resounded mournfully through the hushed and almost silent city: "Bring out your dead! bring out your dead!"

When any person was seized with the plague, the house in which he lived was shut up. The door was fastened on the outside, a red cross was painted upon

it with the words, "Lord, have mercy upon us." A watchman was set to see that no one entered and no one came out. Food and water were carried to these houses at fixed times every day.

These were not all the horrors of the time. Many thought they saw burning swords and gigantic darts in the sky. Others pretended that at night vast crowds of ghosts walked round and round the dismal pits where the dead were buried.

One madman, carrying a brazier full of burning coals upon his head, stalked through the streets crying out that he was a prophet sent to declare the vengeance of the Lord on wicked London. Another always went to and fro, exclaiming, "Yet forty days, and London shall be destroyed!" A third awoke the echoes in the dismal streets by night and by day, and made the blood of the sick run cold, by calling out in a deep, hoarse voice, "Oh, the great and dreadful God!"

A good clergyman, who refused to leave his parish and his people, wrote, "Now the people fall as thick as the leaves in autumn when they are shaken by a mighty wind."

In September large bonfires were lighted to purify the air; and an odd sight it was to see those vast fires blazing in the middle of the streets night and day.

As the cold weather set in, the plague by degrees died out. The number of deaths began to decrease, the red crosses slowly to disappear, the fugitives to return, the

shops to open again, and pale, frightened faces to be seen in the streets. The plague had been in every part of England; but in close and unwholesome London alone, more than one hundred thousand persons had died.

By the beginning of the next year, the town filled again. It must have been a sad home-coming; in many houses half of the family was swept away; in some, all had died — from the oldest to the youngest. "Never did so many husbands and wives," says a quaint writer of that day, "die together; never did so many parents carry their children with them to the grave, and go together into the same house under the earth who had lived together in the same house upon it."

30. THE GREAT FIRE OF LONDON.

In the Year 1666.

NOW you must know that London, a little more than two hundred years ago, was a city of narrow and crooked streets. The houses were built of wood and thatched with straw, and crowded so close together that persons living on one side of the street could almost shake hands out of their upper windows with those who lived on the other side. This was very unhealthful. But a terrible remedy was at hand.

The summer of 1666 was very dry and very hot, as the summer of the plague year had also been. A terrible fire broke out on the second of September. It is called the Great Fire because never before or since has there been so great a fire in England. It broke out in a baker's shop, near London Bridge, on the spot where a monument now stands as a remembrance of those raging flames.

A strong east wind was blowing, and the flames spread so quickly among the wooden houses that the whole city was soon in flames. It spread and spread, and burned and burned for three days. The nights were lighter than the days; in the daytime there was a huge cloud of smoke, and in the night a big tower of fire

mounting up into the sky, which lighted the whole country for miles and miles around.

Showers of hot ashes rose into the air and fell in places far away; flying sparks carried the fire to various parts of the city and kindled it in twenty new spots at a time; church steeples fell down with tremendous crash, and houses crumbled into cinders by the hundred and the thousand.

The Londoners who stood on the south side of the river Thames saw a great bank of fire about two miles in length and one in breadth. The noise, the crackling, the roar and thunder of the flames, the fall of houses, towers, and churches, the shrieking of women and children deafened the ears as the glowing flames blinded the eye. It looked like one awful storm of fire, smoke, and cinders. The air was so filled with smoke that the sun shone through it with a color like blood.

The smoke streamed into the country in a black column nearly fifty miles long; men in distant parts of the land walked along the lanes and the country roads under a dark shade; and the rays of the bright autumn sun were shut out from the harvest fields.

The country roads were crowded with poor people hurrying from the doomed city; and the river Thames was covered with boats and barges full of furniture and frightened families. Looking towards the burning houses, they saw their pigeons, of which they were so fond, fly round and round the blazing windows where

they used to come to be fed, and then fall suddenly into the all-devouring flames.

The fields to the north of London were filled with thousands upon thousands of houseless men, women, and children. They lay on the ground or sat upon any pieces of furniture they had been able to save, with hunger and poverty staring them in the face, "yet not asking one penny for relief."

The fire was stopped by blowing up numbers of houses with gunpowder, thus making gaps so large that the flames could not overleap them.

King Charles the Second and his brother, who was afterwards James the Second, along with some other gentlemen, eagerly took charge of this work and spared no pains in showing how it must be done.

The fire raged for three days. When it had stopped, it was found that the cathedral, — St. Paul's, — 89 churches, 460 streets, and 13,200 dwelling houses had been destroyed.

It was seemingly a great misfortune, but in reality a great blessing. The city afterwards arose from its ruins very much improved. The dirty, narrow streets had disappeared; new streets were built, much broader, more breezy, and more open to the healthful influences of the sun and the air.

31. THE FLIGHT OF KING JAMES THE SECOND.

James the Second reigned from 1685 to 1689.

JAMES the Second was the last of the four Stuart kings of England. Like his father, Charles the First, he was not on good terms with his subjects. When he came to the throne he made a sacred pledge to abide by the laws of the land. The pledge was heartily received by the whole country. "We have the word of a king" was the cry of the people.

King James was looked upon as narrow, stubborn, and despotic in heart, but even his enemies did not accuse him of being false. Above all, he was believed to be keenly alive to the honor of his country.

It would be too long a story to tell you of the bitter struggle between the king and his unhappy subjects. At last, the king proved a traitor to the interests of the people and of the nation. He was hated and despised by both his friends and his enemies for his many cruel and tyrannical acts. Good and true men of all parties thought it to be for the best interest of the nation to get rid of their arrogant king.

And so, after the struggle had gone on for some time, they sent a message to a Dutch prince, William of Orange, who had married Mary, the daughter of James himself, asking him to come over and be their king.

William at once collected a large fleet, and with a strong army landed at the little port of Torbay, in the south of Devonshire. He had previously issued an address to the people, saying that he was coming to protect their religious and civil liberties.

When the news of William's landing reached London, the friends and favorites, and even the children of James, fled from their royal master. First his nephew, then his son-in-law, and then his second daughter, Annie, deserted him. When James heard the news that his daughter had fled from his palace, he burst into tears and exclaimed, "God help me! Even my own children have forsaken me!"

William was slowly and steadily marching on to London with his troops; and at length James saw there was no hope left, and that the time had come when he must flee. First of all he sent away his wife. About three in the morning, the queen, carrying her infant child in her arms, went down the river stairs of Whitehall Palace and got into a small boat. It was a dark and dismal night in December; the rain poured in torrents; the Thames was swollen with a high tide; a strong wind was blowing; but at length the boat reached the pier at Lambeth.

The coach that had been ordered was not ready. The queen was afraid to go into the inn where her face might be known, so she crouched under the tower of Lambeth Church for shelter from the storm. The babe

was well wrapped up, warm and cosy, and so did not cry. At last the coach was ready, and the queen was driven to Gravesend, where she found a vessel, in which she escaped to France.

Louis the Fourteenth, the king of France, received her very kindly, and gave her a palace for her dwelling and a yearly sum of money to live on. Eight days after the queen's escape, James also left Whitehall, and made his way, after some wonderful escapes, to the shores of France. He also was most kindly received by Louis.

The two kings went together to Queen Mary's room. Stopping at the door, the French king bowed kindly, and said to her, "Here is a gentleman, cousin, whom you will be very glad to see."

James never again set foot in England, and with him ended the reign of the Stuarts. He foolishly thought himself above the law — as no one is or can be; and this wrong notion had cost his father his head, as it now cost James himself his crown.

When it was found that the king had fled, the Prince of Orange called a Parliament, and after some time it was agreed that the flight of King James had made the throne of England vacant. It was then offered to William and his wife, Mary.

This event in English history is known as the Revolution of 1688.

32. THE FAMOUS SIEGE OF LONDONDERRY.

In the Year 1689.

WHEN William, Prince of Orange, was made king of England in 1688, most of the Irish people remained true to the old king, James the Second. A bitter war broke out between the followers of William and those of James. One of the most stirring events in this war was the siege of Londonderry.

Londonderry, or Derry as it is often called, is a fine seaport town in the north of Ireland. It stands on the bank of a river up which the tide flows from the outer sea. The people of the town were of English and Scotch descent. They took sides with William and Mary.

William was at this time too busy elsewhere to come to Ireland. His followers in that country had, therefore, to do the best they could for themselves. The king of France had sent James both money and officers to drill his army; and James had made up his mind to get back his kingdom of Ireland. If he gained that, he might then try for England.

James and his army marched on Londonderry. The governor of the town, whose name was Lundy, had no hope of being able to hold out. The defences of the place were almost in ruins.

The walls were overgrown with grass and weeds; there were no ramparts that could keep out an enemy; and the towers and forts were too weak to stand the fire of cannon.

They had no regular soldiers in the place. Their supply of firearms was short, and the townspeople were not used to military drill. They had very few pieces of cannon. The few they had were in bad order, and they had scarcely any man who knew how to serve them. Worst of all, they were short of provisions.

The governor thought the only thing to be done was to give up the town. But the townspeople did not agree with him. Led by a good old clergyman, they declared that they were ready to die rather than give in; and they at once began to put the defences of the town in better order.

When King James appeared with his army, he marched up to within a hundred yards of the town, expecting to be able to walk in at once and without fighting. But he was met with cries of "No surrender!" and with a shot from a cannon, which made him get out of the way in somewhat of a hurry.

The people were so angry with the governor that they would have torn him to pieces. He was for some time in great fear; but the good clergyman helped him to get away. He left the place by night, climbing down the town wall by the branches of a pear tree, and made off.

For nine days a constant fire of cannon was kept up against the city. Then James, thinking the time was come, ordered his men to march in. But the brave citizens would not let them. They lined the wall in three ranks. Those behind loaded the muskets of those in front; the women handed their brothers, fathers, and husbands powder and shot. All fought so well that they beat back the forces of James at every point.

James was in a terrible rage with the people of the town. "Very well," he cried, "if we cannot beat them, we can starve them out!" No food could now be sent into Londonderry. Ships from England laden with food, soldiers, and powder and shot had come to the mouth of the river on which the town stands; but the enemy had placed cannon on both banks, and had also blocked the channel with a boom made of logs and iron chains to prevent the ships from sailing up.

The people were soon brought to a fearful state. Most of them became mere skin and bone, with sunken cheeks and hollow eyes. Dogs, cats, rats, horses, and tallow — all were eaten up.

Even hides were gnawed and sucked for some little support. Grain was doled out by mouthfuls; the price of a dog's paw was five shillings. An old shoe was looked upon as a good dinner; and rats were taken in traps and eaten. If a man caught a fish in the river, he would not sell it for money; he would take nothing but food in exchange.

No one spoke of giving in. The weaker died so fast that they could not be buried, — no one was strong enough to dig their graves. And yet no one spoke of yielding. Still the people called out from the walls, "No surrender!"

At last, when the poor people of the town were brought to their last scrap of food, three of King William's vessels made their way up the river. One of them broke the boom and the other two passed safely through the breach.

It was ten o'clock at night when the ships arrived at the wharves. And what a scene was there! All the people of the town were gathered to see the unloading of the ships. What cheers! What thankful prayers! What joyful sobs were heard as the sailors rolled on shore barrels of Scotch meal, casks of beef, kegs of butter, sacks of pease and biscuit, huge cheeses, and flitches of bacon!

James and his army now saw that it was a hopeless task to try to take a town defended by people so courageous, so enduring under suffering, as was this people. They therefore marched off.

The next morning the townspeople saw, instead of the white tents of the Irish army, scores of blazing bonfires reddening all the air. Then all were filled with gladness; they rushed to the church bells and rang out loud and merry peals of joy for the freedom that had at last come to them.

33. BONNIE PRINCE CHARLIE'S ESCAPE.

In the Year 1746.

WHEN the little babe, the son of James the Second who was carried off by his mother from Whitehall that dark December night, grew to be a man, he made an attempt to get back the crown which his father had lost. But he did not succeed.

His son also tried, and he too failed. The son of James the Second is known as the Old Pretender; his grandson as the Young Pretender. The name of the Old Pretender was Prince James; that of the Young Pretender was Prince Charles Edward, or as the Scotch, with whom he was a great favorite, called him, "Bonnie Prince Charlie."

The hopes of Prince Charlie were ruined in the crushing defeat which he and his brave Highland soldiers suffered on the field of Culloden, near the town of Inverness, in 1746. He had to flee for his life. He wandered up and down the Highlands of Scotland; and although his hiding-places were known to hundreds of persons, who were mostly very poor, and though the large reward of thirty thousand pounds had been offered to any one who would give him up, no man even thought of pointing a finger to his place of concealment.

Many shielded the poor prince at the risk of their own lives; and, after five months of wandering, he escaped safely to France. During these weary months he had endured many hardships,— cold, hunger, and fatigue. Though constantly in danger, he showed himself brave and cheerful; and this is one reason why the Scotch people loved him so well.

He was hunted by soldiers night and day, as if he were a wild beast; and he had to be always moving from place to place. Sometimes he would snatch a few hours' sleep in a cowshed, on a heap of dirty straw; at other times he would sleep in a cave, or even on the open hillside. His food was of the coarsest kind, served in the iron kettle in which it had been cooked. Out of it he and his followers ate in company, the prince being the only one who had a silver spoon. One day all he could get was a mixture of oatmeal and sea-water.

Hunger, illness, wet and rough weather sorely changed the handsome looks of the gay young prince. A Scottish poet sang of him:

> "On hills that are by right his own
> He roams a lonely stranger;
> On every hand he 's pressed by want,
> On every side by danger."

One morning Prince Charlie shot a deer, and his faithful follower Burke was cooking some steaks cut from it. A poor starved boy, who chanced to pass, snatched up one of the steaks, and Burke gave him a heavy

blow on the head. Charles turned to his follower and said: "Ned, you don't remember the Scriptures. They tell us to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. You ought to give him a meal rather than a blow."

It was when hiding in the west of Scotland that he met Flora Macdonald, a brave and gentle lady whose

FLORA MACDONALD HELPS PRINCE CHARLIE TO ESCAPE.

home was in the island of Skye. Prince Charlie was by this time in a wretched condition. When Flora saw him, she wept. She promised to be his guide to Skye, and obtained from her father a safe conduct for herself and an Irish girl, Betty Burke.

Next morning the prince was dressed as Betty Burke, and in this disguise he set out on his journey with his companion. All night they rowed through a wild storm to Skye; but a greater danger awaited them on shore. Flora went alone to the castle of a friendly nobleman to seek help for the prince.

There she found a party of soldiers who were searching for the Pretender; but with the help of friends he reached a place of safety.

If it had not been for the risk they ran, his friends would have been amused by the mistakes made by the prince in his character of Betty Burke. Once when crossing a stream, he lifted the skirts of his dress. Next time he forgot it and let his dress float in the water; and when the country people curtesied to the party, the prince bowed instead of curtesying in return. "You are the worse Pretender," said his friend Lord Kinsburgh, "that I ever saw."

A few hours later, Lady Kinsburgh, who had retired early, was startled by her little girl running into the room and crying that her father had "brought home the oddest wife she had ever seen, and had brought her into the hall too, where she was walking backwards and forwards in a manner perfectly frightful."

In a few days Flora Macdonald bade farewell to the prince, and never saw him again. Prince Charlie returned to France, but never again to Scotland.

The love of those who served him, however, did not

die, even when all hope of his return was gone. Long afterwards his memory was cherished, and many a stirring song is still sung of "Bonnie Prince Charlie." The following lines are an example of this devoted loyalty to a hopeless cause:

"Over the water, and over the sea,
And over the water to Charlie;
Come weal, come woe, we 'll gather and go,
And live or die with Charlie."

This was the last attempt of the Stuart line to regain the throne of their fathers; and when in 1788 the unfortunate prince died in Rome, the ill-fated house of Stuart disappeared from history.

34. THE BLACK HOLE OF CALCUTTA.

In the Year 1756.

VICTORIA, Queen of Great Britain, is now also Empress of India, and rules over more than two hundred millions of subjects in that far-away country. But about a hundred and fifty years ago Great Britain had little power in India, and the native rulers and princes could do pretty much as they pleased.

There was, in the year 1756, a native prince whose name was Surajah Dolwah; he ruled over Bengal and some other countries near it. This prince took offence at the English in India, marched to Calcutta at the head of a large army, and laid siege to the fort. The fort of Calcutta was held by a commander named Holwell, who, with the aid of a few brave officers and a small but active body of troops, kept it against the large army of the Indian prince.

At length, however, the brave commander had to give it up; and the prince promised on the word of a soldier that no harm should be done either to him or to any of his officers or men or to their wives. In spite of his promise, one hundred and forty-six English residents, one of whom was a woman, were driven, at the point of the bayonet, into a place known in history by the name of the "Black Hole."

This was a room less than twenty feet square, with two small windows — barred with iron — to the west; but these were of little use for the supply of fresh air.

It was summer. The night was close and sultry. There was not a breath of wind. Many of the prisoners were wounded, and all of them were worn out with hard work. When they saw that the Indian prince had broken his vow and that they were in danger of dying for want of fresh air, they were filled with rage.

They tried to open the door, that they might rush upon the swords of the Indian soldiers who stood guard outside. But the door opened inwards, and the crowd inside pressed strongly upon it. Mr. Holwell, who was standing at one of the windows, spoke to a sergeant of the Indian guard and offered him two hundred pounds, or one thousand dollars in our money, if he would place half of them in another room. The soldier was eager for the reward and promised to do what he could. But in a few minutes he returned and told him that the prince was asleep, and that no one dared to go near him.

A fearful sweat now broke out on every one, and this was followed by a terrible thirst. The poor creatures stripped themselves of their clothes, sat down on the floor, and fanned the air with their hats. But many were unable to rise again and were trodden or choked to death. Every one was gasping for a breath of fresh air.

All wished for death to put an end to their sufferings. They shouted insults to the Indian guards to provoke them to fire upon them. When this was in vain, the cry of "Water! water!" rose from every mouth. The Indian sergeant ordered some skins of water to be brought to the window. Some went mad at the very sight of it. There was no other way of passing it through the windows to the poor wretches than by hats. Many fought to get nearest the windows, and the weaker of them were soon trampled to the ground and sank never to rise again.

In the morning when the prison door was opened one hundred and twenty-three persons lay dead. Only twenty-three remained alive. Pale as corpses, weak, withered, sunken-eyed, these twenty-three persons staggered forth from their foul and awful prison. Men of thirty looked like old men of eighty; for the hours they had spent among the dying and dead seemed like years of misery to the survivors of this most dastardly deed.

Some months later the famous Lord Clive avenged this terrible crime. The army of the cruel prince was routed in the battle of Plassey with great slaughter. That victory made the English masters of Bengal, and laid the foundation of British rule over the vast Indian Empire.

35. THE BRAVE LORD NELSON.

The Battle of Trafalgar was fought in the Year 1805.

WHEN some of your great grandfathers were little boys, there was a great war between England and France. Many of the battles were fought at sea. England had good ships and brave sailors and bold captains in plenty; but the best sailor and the boldest captain of them all was Lord Horatio Nelson.

When he first went to sea, at twelve years of age, he was a wee bit of a lad; but he was full of pluck and spirit, and never knew what it was to be afraid. He sailed all over the world before he was a man, and when war broke out he was made captain of a man-of-war. He fought and beat the French in many a brave sea fight; and you will surely wish to read about his victories when you are older.

In one battle this brave officer lost an eye, in another he lost an arm; but though he had but one eye and one arm, he was always the first in the fight and the last out. He never would give in. At the battle of Copenhagen two of his ships ran aground. Admiral Parker, who had command of the fleet, thought Nelson had no chance of winning; so he hung out the signal to "stop fighting."

But Nelson took no heed of it. His one eye danced

with glee as the guns roared, and ropes and bits of timber flew through the air. When a shot struck the mast of his own ship and broke it to bits, he only said, "Warm work this! But I would n't be out of it for all the world!" Some one told him that the signal was up to "stop fighting."

DEATH OF NELSON.

He laughed; and, putting the glass to his blind eye, he said: "I don't see the signal. Keep mine flying for closer battle. Nail it to the mast." And he kept on fighting till he won the battle; and for his great victory he was made lord admiral of the fleet.

Nelson's last fight was at Trafalgar, off the coast of Spain. A great fleet of French and Spanish ships was on its way to England. The French hoped to sweep the English ships from the seas, and to land a French army on the coast of England. But Nelson went out to fight them, and came up with them in Trafalgar Bay. He made ready at once for battle, knowing

that if he won it England would be saved. He felt sure of victory. Yet he could not help thinking that he would lose his own life before the day was over.

When Captain Blackwood, who came for orders, left to go back to his ship, Nelson shook hands with him and said, "God bless you, Blackwood, I shall never see you again!" Before the battle began, Nelson hung out his last famous signal, "England expects every man to do his duty"; and the sailors in answer gave a ringing British cheer.

Nelson's ship was called the "Victory." It was stationed in the hottest part of the battle. He wore his admiral's coat, with all his medals and crosses on his breast. His officers asked him to take them off, saying that if the French saw them they would know who he was, and would be sure to fire at him. But Nelson would not. "No," he said, "in honor I won them, and in honor I will die with them."

In the midst of the battle when every man was sure of victory, a bullet from a French ship struck Nelson in the back, and he fell with face forwards on the deck. Captain Hardy was soon at his side.

"Hardy," said Nelson, "they have done for me at last."

"I hope not," said Hardy.

"Yes," replied Nelson, "my back bone is shot through."

They carried him below, while the battle still went on.

After a while Hardy went below and found Nelson waiting eagerly to hear the news of the battle.

"Well, Hardy," said the admiral, "how goes the day with us?"

"Very well," said Hardy; "ten of the French ships have struck their colors."

When he found that all went well, the dying admiral spoke of himself. "Hardy," he said, "I am a dead man. I am going fast." Hardy went on deck again, but came back at the end of an hour, and told Nelson that fifteen ships had been taken. "That is well," said Nelson.

Then he took Hardy's hand and said to him, in a low voice, "Don't throw me overboard! Kiss me!" Hardy knelt down and kissed him.

"Now," said Nelson, "I am satisfied. God bless you, Hardy! Thank God, I have done my duty."

These were his last words. The battle had been won. England was safe, and as brave a spirit as ever lived had gone to its rest.

36. THE IRON DUKE AND THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

The Battle of Waterloo was fought in the Year 1815.

WHILE the brave Lord Nelson was fighting England's battles at sea, there was another, as great as he, fighting her battles on land. This was Arthur Wellesley, afterwards made Duke of Wellington, and sometimes called the "Iron Duke." He was born in Ireland and educated at Eton, but he spent some time in a French military college learning the art of war.

His French masters, who taught him how to fight, little thought they were teaching him to defeat all their best generals. But so it was. After winning great fame in India, Wellesley was sent out to Spain, where he won many victories over the French, beating all of Napoleon's most famous generals and driving his army back over the Pyrenees.

But the most famous battle that Wellington ever won was the great battle of Waterloo, which was fought near Brussels in Belgium. Here he faced the great Napoleon himself. It was the first and last time that Wellington and Napoleon ever met. The French emperor was eager to crush the man who had beaten his generals, and said with joy, as he marched towards Belgium: "I go to measure swords with Wellington."

When Wellington drew up his troops on a green hill-slope, with a great forest in the rear, Napoleon thought he had caught him in a trap, and cried out in high glee: "Now I have him!" But he little knew the man he had to deal with.

On the forenoon of Sunday, June 18, 1815, when the church bells were ringing in England, a long, loud peal from the French cannon broke the Sabbath stillness of Waterloo. Then began that battle of heroes which lasted till sunset. Again and again did the French rush forward to the attack, and again and again were they driven back.

The English, who were mostly drawn up in squares, seemed rooted to the earth like masses of rock. Time after time the deadly fire from the French guns would make bloody gaps in their ranks; but at the stern, steady cry, "Close up!" the men in the rear would take the places of their fallen comrades. Then the French horsemen, with steel breastplates and flying plumes, would come sweeping down upon the squares, but only to be shot down or hurled back again from a living hedge of steel.

Wellington, on his famous horse "Copenhagen," rode from post to post, cheering his men and bidding them "stand their ground to the last man." When he saw the French horsemen rushing up to a square that had been terribly cut up, he called out, "Stand firm, my lads! what will they say of this in England!" Wherever

danger was, there was Wellington to be found. As the shots fell thick about him, he coolly remarked, "They shoot better than they did in Spain."

When he saw the French guns making such havoc among his squares, he quietly said, "Hard pounding, gentlemen! we will see who can pound the longest." The men were eager to be led against the French, and some of the Irish regiments began to murmur; but Wellington quieted them, and said, "Not yet, lads; wait a little longer."

At one time during the day, when the battle seemed doubtful, and the best and bravest were falling thick and fast, some of his officers would have lost heart, but Wellington kept up their spirits. "Never mind," he said to them, "we 'll win this battle yet." At last, when it was near sunset, Napoleon ordered his old guards, who had never yet been beaten, to charge the English and make one last effort to win the day.

Wellington, who saw them coming on, placed his own guards four deep in a ditch behind the slope, and waited in silence for the charge. When the French gained the ridge they saw only Wellington and his staff. But the next moment they heard a voice — it was the duke's — like the shrill blast of a trumpet, cry, "Up, guards, and at them!" From the ground there started up, as if by magic, a long line of redcoats, who poured a deadly volley into the French and then rushed at them with cold steel.

As the French gave way and fled down the hill, Wellington gave the long-wished-for order along the whole line for his army to advance. With a cheer that struck fear into the hearts of the French, the English, who had stood still all day to be shot at, now sprang gladly forward; and soon the whole French army was fleeing in hopeless rout.

There are many stories of brave deeds done on the field of Waterloo. In one of the terrible cavalry charges, the Highlanders were ordered to fall back, when the sergeant who bore the colors was shot dead and fell into a ditch. The French horse were rushing down upon them, and in another moment the colors of the regiment might have fallen into their hands.

A stalwart Highlander, who saw the danger, leaped into the ditch to take the colors from the dead man's hands. But it was in vain; the sergeant even in death held his colors with a grip of iron. What was to be done? There was not a moment to lose. The Highlander did not hesitate. Taking up his comrade — flag and all — he lifted him on to his back and made off with him just as the French horsemen reached the ditch.

The captain of the French cavalry, seeing the brave deed, shouted to his men, "Halt!" Every man of the troop reined in his horse and sat looking at the gallant Highlander; and as the brave fellow made off with the colors, they cheered him with a wild hurrah, shouting "Bravo, Scot!"

On one of the slopes of Waterloo there was an old farmhouse with a hedge and an orchard around it; Wellington ordered his troops to hold this farm at any cost. But the French swarmed round about it and set fire to the hedges and orchard, and at last the brave defenders ran short of powder and ball.

What was to be done? If the poor fellows could not have powder and shot, how could they hold their ground against the French? Two wagons filled with cartridges were sent off at once to the farm. But the hedge was still burning; and as the first wagon with its driver crashed through it, the powder took fire, and horse, wagon, and driver were blown into atoms. The driver who rode the horse in the second wagon was a young country lad who had only just joined the army; but he soon showed what stuff he was made of. He spurred his horse into a gallop, burst through the burning hedge, and landed the powder-wagon safely on the other side. "It was bravely done," said Wellington when he heard of it, "and if that lad lives out this day I will make him an officer." But when the day was done, that brave country lad lay dead behind the farmyard wall.

Waterloo was a battle more terrible and decisive than Europe had known for centuries. Not long afterward Napoleon gave himself up to the English, and Europe had peace for forty years.

37. TWO GREAT INVENTORS.

ABOUT the middle of the last century, a little boy in the town of Greenock on the river Clyde, in Scotland, used to be scolded by his aunt for meddling with the kitchen tea kettle. He would hold down the lid when the water boiled, or he would take off the lid and put it on again, or he would hold a silver spoon over the steam as it puffed out of the spout and watch it turning into drops of water. All this made the boy wonder what produced the force that lifted the cover of the kettle and made it rattle.

His aunt thought this was not very safe work for a boy. He would be sure to scald himself, she said, some day. Besides, it was a great waste of time. Had he no lessons to learn? Had he no books to read? Could he not find something to do that would be more useful? Such idle habits could lead to nothing good!

This idler, this dreamer, was James Watt, who by and by gave to the world the steam engine in a form that was fitted for everyday use. There were crude steam engines before Watt's time, but he improved them so much that he is commonly called the inventor of the steam engine; and he got his first notions of the power of steam from his aunt's tea kettle.

When he grew up, Watt settled in Glasgow. A small engine was sent to him for repair. He spent some time on it, only to discover its faults; at best it was but a toy, and was of little or no real use.

Watt resolved to make a useful steam engine. He spent ten years on it — years of planning and experimenting, years of doubt and fear, of distress and poverty, but also of hope and high courage; and at last he succeeded to the utmost that he could have wished. Then he met with a rich merchant who saw the value of the invention, and joined with Watt in setting up near Birmingham the first great engine factory in the world.

The story is told that once upon a time Watt took a working model of his engine to show to the king. His majesty said to him, "Well, my man, what have you to sell?" The inventor promptly replied, "What kings covet, may it please your majesty, — power!" The story is perhaps too good to be true, but the fact that Watt furnished the world with a "power," far-reaching in its results, cannot be denied.

The effect of the invention of the engine on mining and manufactures was enormous. The brains of other men were busily planning all sorts of things in order to take advantage of it to the utmost.

Within twenty years after Watt had finished his engine, Arkwright had made his spinning machine, Crompton had invented his spinning-jenny, and Cartwright's power-loom weaving machine had started the

cotton manufacture on its wonderful career. Other inventions followed, and in course of time England was called "the workshop of the world."

But the greatest of all the uses of the steam engine is in vessels and railroads. The first steamship in Great Britain was the "Comet," which plied on the river Clyde in 1812; although Robert Fulton in this country had invented a steamboat in 1807. The first successful "steam horse," or locomotive engine, in the world was made by George Stephenson, who also planned and made the first public railroads ever built in England or in the world.

George Stephenson was the son of a poor collier in the north of England. When a young man he became a fireman like his father. He taught himself mathematics during the night shifts; and when he could snatch a few moments in the time allowed for meals during the day, he worked his problems with a bit of chalk upon the sides of the colliery wagons.

But Stephenson had a wonderful genius for machine-making, and very soon he became master of the steam engine. He became famous in his neighborhood as an "engine doctor." When anything went wrong with a steam engine, George Stephenson was the man to put it right. While he was engineer at a colliery near Newcastle, the idea occurred to him of making a "steam horse" to draw the cars of coal from the pit to the wharf where ships were loaded.

He tried and tried and tried again, and succeeded at last in making, in 1814, an engine; and because it made such a noise it was popularly known as "Puffing Billy." It was a rude and clumsy piece of work. Fifteen years later Stephenson turned out the "Rocket," which ran at the rate of twenty-five or even thirty-five miles an hour.

This invention began a new era in the world's history. From it dates the marvelous spread of railroads over Great Britain, over the continents of Europe and America, and indeed over the world. It has brought distant countries together, and has increased a hundredfold the knowledge and comfort of mankind.

We must remember that these great blessings have been the result of victories won, not by conquerors on the battlefield, but by heroes of peace,— the Scotchman James Watt and the Englishman George Stephenson.

38. HOW VICTORIA BECAME QUEEN OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Victoria became Queen in the Year 1837.

KING WILLIAM the Fourth died in the year 1837, without leaving any children. The nearest heir to the throne of England was his niece, a young princess named Victoria. She was the daughter of the Duke of Kent. When William the Fourth died, it became the duty of two noblemen to go to the young princess and tell her that she was now queen of the British Empire.

Accordingly, two men of high rank drove from Windsor to Kensington Palace, where the young princess was living. They left Windsor at half past two o'clock in the morning of the 20th of June, and did not reach Kensington till five. It was still early, and not a soul was stirring. They knocked and rang for a long time before they were able to rouse the porter at the palace gate.

When at length they had awakened him, the gate was opened; but they were still kept waiting in the courtyard. Then they were shown into one of the lower rooms. No one came near them for some time, and they seemed to have been forgotten by everybody. At length they rang the bell. When the servant came they asked him to let the Princess Victoria know that they wished to see her on business of the greatest importance.

PRINCESS VICTORIA LEARNS OF HER UNCLE'S DEATH AND THAT SHE IS QUEEN OF ENGLAND.

Again they were left for some time, and again they rang. One of the ladies of the palace came to them. She told them that the princess was in such a sweet sleep that she could not venture to disturb her. To this they replied, "We are come on business of state to the princess, and even her sleep must give way to that."

The princess, now the queen, was roused. She at least did not keep the gentlemen waiting. For in a few minutes she came down to them, in a loose white dress and shawl, her hair falling over her shoulders, tears in her eyes, but perfectly calm. She was told the news. It was a great grief to her to hear of the death of her uncle; it was no joy to know that the crown of Great Britain was now her own.

The king died at twenty minutes past two in the morning, and the young queen met her council in Kensington Palace at eleven. She was quite plainly dressed and in mourning. Nothing could have been better than her calm and kind manner. She was only a girl of eighteen, and every one was eager to know how she would behave.

On entering the council room she bowed to the lords, took her seat, and read her speech in a clear, distinct voice. There was no sign of fear or hurry in her face or in her manner. When her two uncles, both old men, knelt before her, she blushed up to the eyes. Her manner to them was very graceful and engaging. She kissed them both, rose from her chair, and walked

up to the Duke of Sussex, who was farthest from her and too weak to go to her.

The Duke of Wellington, whom we have just read of as the "Iron Duke," said, in his blunt way, that if she

QUEEN VICTORIA VISITING THE POOR.

had been his own daughter, he could not have desired to see her do her part better.

The people soon came to be very fond of their girl queen. No sovereign of Britain has ever ruled better than Queen Victoria, nor has the vast empire of Britain ever been more prosperous than it has been under her rule.

A year after she came to the throne, she was publicly crowned at Westminster Abbey. All the great officers of state were there, and so were the noblemen of England and many famous strangers. The walls were hung with crimson cloth with gold edges, and many of the people present were splendidly dressed; it was a very grand sight.

When the crown was placed on the young queen's head, all shouted, "God save the Queen!" Hats and handkerchiefs were waved, trumpets were blown, and signals were made so that guns might be fired in different parts of London. For some days afterwards there was great rejoicing, and all the people showed how fond they were of their new sovereign. Their love for her has gone on increasing ever since, and Queen Victoria was never more beloved than she is at the present day.

When the queen is in London she lives at Buckingham Palace; but she has several homes in the country, at which she spends a great part of the year.

Though the people see the queen but seldom, she works day by day for their good. She has always maintained the laws of the land, and observed them strictly herself. She has been influenced by the advice of the wisest men, whom the nation has chosen to make the laws in Parliament.

So the English people love her now just as much as they did sixty years ago, and still go on singing with all their hearts, "God save the Queen!"

39. HOW THEY FOUGHT IN THE CRIMEA.

From 1854 to 1856.

RUSSIA and Turkey are neighbors: Russia strong and overbearing, Turkey poor and weak. Now, though Russia is the largest country in Europe, she has never been contented with her millions of acres, but has always longed for a share of the land of the Sultan.

In 1854 Russia picked a quarrel with Turkey, and forced her to fight. The English and the French came to the help of the weaker power and sent an army to the Crimea, a part of Russia which runs out into the Black Sea, and which is very near Turkey. The two armies met for the first time on the banks of the river Alma.

Here a great battle was fought. The French and the English dashed into the stream and crossed it, in spite of the terrible hail of Russian bullets which poured from the heights, and which, says an eye witness, "whipped the water of the river into foam." The heights were taken, the Russians were driven away, and fell back upon Sebastopol.

The siege of Sebastopol, one of the strongest fortresses in the world, now began. The allies seized the port of Balaklava, and there they landed men and arms and all kinds of supplies. The Russians tried to drive them out,

and the battle of Balaklava was fought. This is the battle in which the famous charge of the Light Brigade was made. A wrong order was given, but nobody knows to this day who made the mistake.

The six hundred men of the Light Brigade were told to make a charge right up to the mouth of the Russian cannon.

"Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
'Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!' he said;
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred."

Officers and men all knew quite well that such an order ought not to have been given; but that did not matter. They also knew that their duty was only to obey. Not a man flinched. They rode gallantly up to the deadly cannon; and when they returned from the charge, less than half their number were living. They had taken neither guns nor prisoners, but their heroic courage has made their charge one of the most memorable in the annals of war.

The next battle that took place was the battle of Inkermann. It was called the "soldiers' battle" because there was very little movement of troops in it — very little else but hand-to-hand fighting. When the soldiers had used all their shot, they took up stones and threw

them at the enemy; and English and the Russians were mixed up in such dense crowds that the men had to use the butt ends of their muskets.

Worse than any battle was the hard Crimean winter.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.

The men suffered terribly from cold, hunger, and want of proper clothing; and six times as many men died of disease as of wounds.

At home things were in great confusion. The English government was not ready to carry on a war. Raw

coffee was sent out, but no machines for roasting it; a shipload of boots arrived — all made for the left foot; the sick men were sent to one place and the medicine to another.

For a long time there was nobody to look properly after the sick men. All this was in time made right; for by and by a good and noble English lady, whose name was Florence Nightingale, heard of the sufferings of the soldiers, and went out to the Crimea herself with nurses to tend the sick soldiers. Her skill and care saved many a brave man's life, and the men in the sick wards blessed her as she went by their beds.

"Dying men," said an officer, "sat up to catch the sound of her footstep or the flutter of her dress, and fell back on the pillow content to have seen her shadow as it passed." You may imagine how the poor soldiers — and indeed all England and this country, too, for that matter — loved her.

Sebastopol was taken in the year 1855, and peace was made the year after. More than six hundred thousand men lost their lives, and probably more than a million widows and orphans were made such by this cruel war.

40. THE STORY OF THE MUTINY IN INDIA.

In the Year 1857.

ENGLAND has gone through many troubles and dangers, and has weathered many a storm; but perhaps the most terrible danger she ever faced was the mutiny in India, which broke out in the year 1857.

India is the largest and most thickly peopled of the British foreign possessions, and a large army is needed to keep it in order.

Forty years ago there were not English soldiers enough for the Indian army, and so the home government was forced to hire native troops. These troops are called Sepoys. The Sepoys are men of various religions. One of their religions teaches its followers that the cow is a sacred animal, and another teaches that all good men ought to detest the pig.

Now the enemies of England went secretly to see these men, and to some they said that the cartridges they used were greased with the fat of the cow, while to the men of the other religion they whispered that swine's fat had been employed. The Sepoys were very angry and rose against their officers.

Whether the greased cartridges were the real reason for their mutiny is not very certain; perhaps there were other causes. They not only rose against their officers,

but they murdered every English man, woman, and child.

At Cawnpore, General Wheeler was shut up with a few hundred men and more than five hundred women and children in a hospital, round which ran a low mud wall. The rebels surrounded this place and poured in upon the English residents a fire of bullets day and night. From the hour the siege began, the suffering and the courage of the English were incredible. There was no roof between the gallant defenders and the scorching sun; the shadow cast by the low mud wall was but a narrow line.

There was only one well, and it was a target for the Sepoys. The heroes who dared to draw water did so at the risk of their lives; those who returned were few. At last hunger did what the enemy never could have done. Finally the leaders of the Sepoys offered to let General Wheeler and his company go in safety down the river Ganges, if he would only give up his guns, arms, and treasure. He agreed; and the English, leaving their arms, were marched down to the boats.

No sooner had they entered the boats than the Sepoys opened fire upon them. Many of the English were killed; the rest were taken back to Cawnpore, where the men were put to death, and the women and children shut up in one large room. Then some Sepoys were sent in with sabres, and these wretches put every one of the women and children to death.

In Lucknow, a city in the north of India, the British governor saw that the natives were going to attack his people. He put the women and children into the Residency, as the chief fortress in an Indian city is called. The soldiers had fortified this place, and were determined to die rather than let the Sepoys do any harm to their wives or little ones.

The natives in great numbers attacked the fortress again and again, but were always driven back. Still it was a fearful time for the English. For they knew that if these terrible crowds of cruel natives outside could once get into the place, they would kill all the English without mercy. For four months they held out, while disease, hunger, sorrow, and fatigue were preying upon the soldiers and their wives and children within the fortress.

Every one, from Sir Henry Lawrence, the governor, down to the humblest drummer-boy, showed the utmost patience and courage. Sir Henry was killed by the bursting of a shell in the room in which he was sitting.

As he lay dying, his parting words to his friends were, "Mind: never give up; but let every man die at his post." He knew well the cruel enemy they had to deal with.

The great and good General Havelock, after fighting twelve battles on his march, at last cut his way into Lucknow and saved the little garrison. But Havelock's force was too small to drive away the Sepoys and to put

down the revolt; and he in his turn was soon shut up by a much larger force of the rebels.

Sir Colin Campbell, afterwards known as Lord Clyde, was sent from England to help him. When this gallant English general was asked in London when he would be ready to start for India,—which is three thousand miles away,—he quietly replied, "To-morrow."

The English people within the fortress were soon reduced to terrible straits, with an awful death hanging over their heads. At length Sir Colin Campbell, with a large British army, brought them all away safely after they had been shut up for nearly four months.

It is said that a Scottish girl, by the name of Jessie Brown, was the first to recognize amid the din of battle, the shrill sound of the bagpipes of the Highland soldiers, which told the besieged that their deliverers were near. Jessie was presented to the general on his entrance into the fort, and at the officers' banquet her health was drunk by all present, while the pipers marched around the table playing the familiar air of "Auld Lang Syne."

The relief of Lucknow was the last great event in the Indian mutiny, as this rebellion was called, and soon after the British rule was established there more firmly than ever before.

41. BRITAIN, THEN AND NOW.

In the Year 1897.

MANY, many hundreds of years ago, England, as we learned in the first story of this book, was inhabited by a half-savage race of people called Britons. When the great Roman general Julius Caesar came to Britain nearly two thousand years ago, he found these people in it. He has told us in a diary he kept, that they were a race of strong, well-built, and hardy men, swift as deer on foot, and brave and fearless as their own wild cattle.

They knew neither how to spin nor to weave, and their common dress was made of the skins of the animals that roamed through the wild and pathless forests. They spent most of their time in fishing and hunting. With their light basket canoes slung across their shoulders, they could travel from lake to lake, or from river to river.

Above and around circled the various birds which had their homes in the forest. In the wilder parts flew the golden eagle — king over all the birds in the air; and by the seaside, the osprey. A wolf might be lying in wait by the side of the path, or the more savage brown bear might be out in search of prey.

How changed is everything now! The forests have

been cleared away, and their place is now filled by fields of grass or waving grain. The country is now studded with large cities, which are full of busy, well-dressed people, living at peace with each other and obedient to the laws. Where once the ancient Briton paddled about in his hide-covered canoe, countless steamers and sailing vessels now move to and fro.

London was in those very early times a mere village; now it is one of the largest and richest cities in the world. Its houses cover many, many square miles, and it has more people living in it than there are in even such a large state as Ohio or Illinois.

There were then no roads; at best there were only narrow footpaths through the forests or across the moors. A slow and toilsome journey on horseback was the quickest way of getting from one place to another. Now one can travel by the steam cars at the rate of sixty or more miles an hour.

The English people are known all over the world as makers of cotton, woolen, and many other staple goods, and as sellers of glass, china, ironware, and countless other articles of trade. These goods are sent out in sailing vessels and great steamships to all parts of the world, and tea and coffee, sugar and rice, grain and timber are brought back.

Thus the English people live in peace and prosperity under the rule of their gracious queen. Never since the time of King John, more than six hundred years

ago, has the foot of a foreign foe touched the soil of Britain. Shakespeare thus alludes to England in his play of "King Richard the Second":

> "This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,
> This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars.
> . . . . . this little world;
> This precious stone set in the silver sea,
> Which serves it in the office of a wall."

But it should never be forgotten that it has been through the labors and sufferings of many good, brave men and women, that a nation which began as England did is now one of the richest and most prosperous in the world.

For more than eighty years England and the United States, the great English-speaking nations of the world, have lived in peace. On the threshold of the twentieth century these two great peoples are, more firmly than ever before, united by the strong ties which bind nations together for the good of humanity.

We have come to the end of our stories. We hope you have read them with interest and pleasure. We trust that by the reading of this little book your appetite will be whetted to read, when you are older, longer and more complete works. Next to reading the history of our own beloved country, nothing in the shape of history can be more interesting and more useful than that of our mother country.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

BOOKS FOR REFERENCE AND COLLATERAL READING.

THE real significance and scope of supplementary reading in schools would be lost to the teacher who was satisfied with merely having read with the class the preceding "stories" of English history. This book should serve only as a convenient and interesting basis for more extended work both on the part of the teacher and the pupils.

Books for collateral reading, study, and reference may be divided conveniently into two classes. First, a class of books useful for reading and reference which are well provided with tables, indexes, maps, tables of dates, etc. Second, a class of books that are not provided with these formal helps, but are useful for pupils to read and consult at home on topics previously assigned.

The ablest and most useful book of the first class is Montgomery's "Leading Facts of English History" (price, $1.12). This work is deeply interesting and amply provided with all manner of helps to young students. Gardiner's "English History for Schools" (price, 80 cents) is admirably written and is good authority, but has no helps beyond the text itself. Gardiner's larger work, "Student's History of England" (price, $3.00), is a valuable book, both for its text and illustrations, especially for the teacher's use. Green's "Short History of the English People" (one volume, price, $1.20) is also noted for its brilliant and interesting style, and is a useful reference book for teachers.

Of books belonging to the second class, one of the best known and always interesting to young people is Dickens' "Child's History of England." It still retains its popularity with young readers from the charm and vividness of its style. Three other books should be always at hand for quick reference for topical study: Yonge's "Young Folks' History of England,"

Towle's "Young People's History of England," and Louise Creighton's "Stories from English History." Two recent volumes by A. J. Church, entitled "Stories from English History," are valuable for a limited portion of English history.

Two or more of the preceding works are amply sufficient to provide both teacher and pupil with the basal books necessary for school or home use, in connection with an elementary course in English history.

There are, of course, many other books suitable for young readers which will be enjoyed, but which are not always so accessible as the books just mentioned. Among these are Callcott's "Little Arthur's History of England," Gilman's "Magna Charta Stories," "Cameos of English History," and Agnes Strickland's "Tales from English History."

The famous "Henty" books are of a somewhat sensational character, but based upon historic events, and may be occasionally and sparingly read in selections by the teacher to the class. They are admirable heroic romances, and present great events and famous men in so dramatic and so picturesque a light that this author is a great favorite with boys. Among the "Henty" books devoted to English history the following are the best: "Wulf the Saxon," a story of the Norman Conquest; "When London Burned," a story of Restoration times and the Great Fire; "Beric the Briton," a story of the Roman Invasion; "Under Drake's Flag"; "Bonnie Prince Charlie"; "With Clive in India"; "One of the 28th," a tale of Waterloo; "The Dragon and the Raven, or The Days of King Alfred"; and "St. George for England," a tale of Crecy and Poitiers.

Story No. 1, page 1. — Probably the most interesting and picturesque description ever written of England in the olden days from the time of the Druids to the Norman Conquest is given in Miller's "History of the Anglo-Saxons." It is a work little known, but may be found in Bohn's Standard Library. No better book could be used from which to make select readings for the first eleven "stories" of this book.

Story No. 4, page 13. — Read Cowper's poem entitled "Boadicea" ("Open Sesame," vol. ii, p. 116).

NOTE. — "Open Sesame." This is the name of a work of about one thousand pieces of choicest prose and verse, compiled by Mrs. B. W. Bellamy and Mrs. M. W. Goodwin. 3 volumes. Price of each volume, cloth, 75 cents; boards, 50 cents.

Story No. 8, page 31. — For a series of historical books written many years ago, especially for children, the author would recommend most heartily the little red-covered histories by Jacob Abbott and his brother, John S. C. Abbott. Six or more are devoted to English kings and queens. Read in connection with this topic Abbott's "Life of Alfred the Great."

Story No. 11, page 47. — Read Bulwer's "King Harold's Speech to his Soldiers" ("Open Sesame," vol. ii, p. 111) and "Norman Battle Song" ("Open Sesame," vol. i, p. 195). Read Abbott's "Life of William the Conqueror." Read in connection with this lesson selections from chapters i and iii, of Scott's "Ivanhoe"; also Longfellow's "The Norman Baron."

Story No. 12, page 53. — A charming description of the New Forest in the times of Cromwell and the Cavaliers and the stirring events of those days is given in Maryatt's "Children of the New Forest."

Story No. 13, page 57. — Read an extract from Rev. J. White's drama on the "Wreck of the White Ship," found in Knight's "Half Hours of English History." In this work may be found, conveniently arranged for ready reference, a dozen or more extracts from the best writers to illustrate most of the "stories" in this book.

Story No. 15, page 66. — A most interesting and dramatic account of the adventures of Richard the Lion-hearted is given in "The Talisman" and "Ivanhoe," two of the best of Sir Walter Scott's novels. In the former work is a fine description both of Saladin and Richard. In the latter book, in the opening chapters, may be found a vivid account of the everyday life of the Saxons and of the manner in which knights fought in the olden days. Read the poem "Blondell's Song under the Prison Window" ("Open Sesame," vol. ii, p. 145).

Story No. 16, page 72. — For another version of the death of little Prince Arthur the teacher may read to the class the account as given in Shakespeare's "King John," act iv, scene 1. In fact the teacher will be able to find in Shakespeare's historical plays many passages which will afford most interesting reading. For illustration read the famous reference to Queen Elizabeth in "Henry VIII," act v, scene 4; Falstaff and Prince Hal in "Henry IV," act ii, scene 4; and the death of King John in "King John," act v, scenes 6, 7. The teacher will find in Henry Reed's "Lectures on English History" and Warner's "English History in Shakespeare's Plays" two excellent books for reference.

Story No. 20, page 92. — Read Drayton's "Battle of Agincourt" (Open Sesame," vol. iii, p. 235).

Story No. 25, page 112. — Read Bulwer's translation of Schiller's "Invincible Armada" ("Open Sesame," vol. iii, p. 228), Palgrave's "Elizabeth at Tilbury" ("Open Sesame," vol. iii, p. 230), and "Elizabeth's Speech to the Army at Tilbury" ("Open Sesame," vol. iii, p. 232).

Story No. 26, page 118. — This incident of Sir Walter Raleigh's gallant deed is fully described in Scott's "Kenilworth," chapter xv. In this great historical novel are given vivid pictures and descriptions of Queen Elizabeth and the great men of her time. Scott's "Abbot" relates to the history of Mary Queen of Scots. This is a most interesting book from which to select a few choice readings in connection with the story of Queen Elizabeth. Read Abbott's "Life of Queen Elizabeth" and also his "Life of Mary Queen of Scots."

Story No. 27, page 125. — Read Bowles' poem "On the Funeral of Charles I" ("Open Sesame," vol. iii, p. 217). Read Abbott's "Life of Charles I."

Story No. 28, page 130. — A few select readings may be arranged from Scott's "Woodstock" for a masterly account of Cromwell, Charles II, and the Cavaliers and Roundheads of those stirring times. Read Abbott's "Life of Charles II."

Story No. 30, page 139. — For a vivid but imaginary account of the Great Plague, the teacher may read to the class a few selections from De Foe's "History of the Great Plague in London."

Story No. 33, page 149. — A recent work by Andrew Lang, known as "Pickle the Spy, or The Incognito of Prince Charles," is full of curious information about this interesting episode in English history.

Story No. 34, page 154. — The teacher should read to the pupils the celebrated passage from Macaulay's essay on "Lord Clive," which gives a graphic picture of the dastardly deed beginning "Now was committed that great crime," etc.

Story No. 35, page 157. — Read Mrs. Hemans' "Casabianca" ("Open Sesame," vol. i, p. 181), "The Mariners of England" ("Open Sesame," vol. i, p. 202), and "Battle of the Baltic" ("Open Sesame," vol. ii, p. 79), both poems by Thomas Campbell. Select from Southey's "Life of Nelson" some of the incidents and anecdotes in the career of England's great-

est admiral, and also in the same book the account of Nelson's death, a masterly piece of English prose.

Story No. 36, page 161. — Read "Waterloo," an extract from Byron's "Childe Harold" ("Open Sesame," vol. iii, p. 246).

Story No. 38, page 170. — An instructive but informal exercise may be arranged concerning the great events that have taken place in England, and the world generally, since the coronation of Queen Victoria in 1838.

Story No. 39, page 175. — In connection with this story the teacher should read a few selections from a recent novel by Mrs. Steel, "On the Face of the Waters," which gives most vivid pen pictures of many of the great events of the mutiny. Read also Hope's "Story of the Indian Mutiny."

Read Robert Lowell's poem, "The Relief of Lucknow" ("Open Sesame," vol. ii, p. 66).

Story No. 40, page 179. — Read Tennyson's famous poem, "Charge of the Light Brigade" ("Open Sesame," vol. i, p. 192), and Gerald Massey's "Death Ride" ("Open Sesame," vol. ii, p. 57).

Story No. 41, page 183. — In connection with this last "story" may be arranged a most interesting and instructive informal discussion contrasting the wonderful progress made in all that pertains to a higher civilization since "Britain in the Old Days" as described in the first "story." There is a large amount of material from which the ingenious teacher may draw for class use.

A very few dates may be committed to memory, as the first conquest of Caesar, the time of Alfred, of Queen Elizabeth, the first English printer, etc.

A few of the great names of English literature should be associated with certain historical events. Associate the names of Chaucer, Spenser, Bacon, Shakespeare, Milton, Goldsmith, Scott, Tennyson, and others with the prominent events and men of their times.

If copies of Knight's "Pictorial History of England" and Harper's new edition of Green's large "History of England" can be borrowed or obtained for reference, a vast amount of illustrative matter will be found in them.

All such work as we have briefly outlined in these "Notes" tends to maintain the interest of pupils in a study which otherwise may become dull and monotonous.

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